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**Р. Ю. ВИШЕР**

**ДЕЙСТВИТЕЛЬНЫЙ ЧЛЕН АКАДЕМИИ НАУК СССР**



**ИЗДАТЕЛЬСТВО ЛИТЕРАТУРЫ  
НА ИНОСТРАННЫХ ЯЗЫКАХ  
МОСКВА 1947**





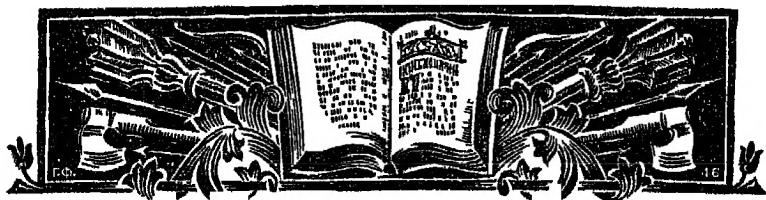
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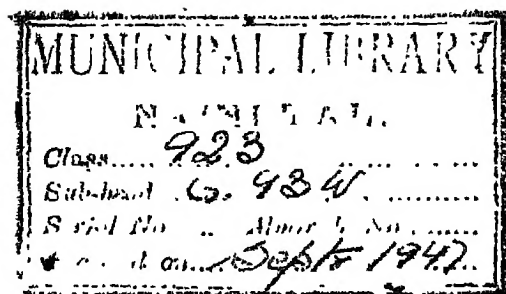




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GEORGE FISHER



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## CONTENTS

	<i>Page</i>
I. THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY . . . . .	9
II. IVAN III'S LEGACY . . . . .	29
III. A WINDOW INTO EUROPE . . . . .	57
IV. THE SUCCESSES AND SETBACKS OF THE MILITARY MONARCHY . . . . .	89
V. THE STRUGGLE AGAINST TREASON . . . . .	129
VI. IVAN GROZNY'S DIPLOMACY . . . . .	167
VII. IVAN IV AND STEPHEN BATHORI . . . . .	189
VIII. A POSTHUMOUS JUDGMENT OF IVAN GROZNY . . . . .	230
<i>Explanatory Notes</i> . . . . .	247
<i>Sources and Literature</i> . . . . .	253





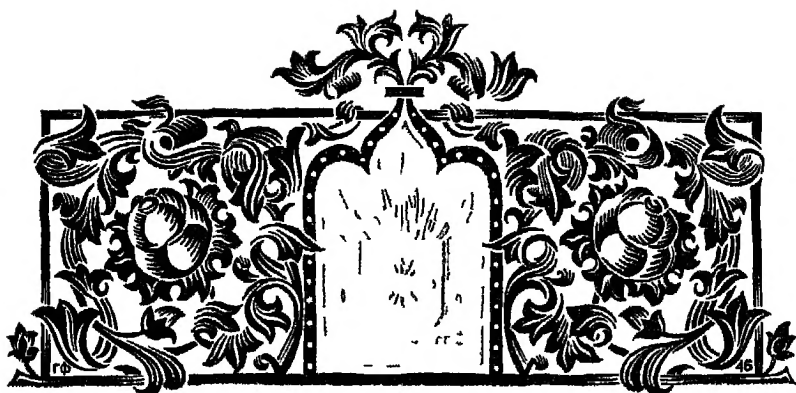
The first edition of my essay *Ivan Grozny* was published in 1922. The subsequent appearance of new sources and of original works by U.S.S.R. historians (*cf.* Bibliography) prompted me to revise my work and to publish it in a new and enlarged edition (Gosizdat—State Publishers—Uzbek S.S.R., Tashkent, 1942. second edition).

The present third edition is a slightly revised reproduction of the second edition.

R. WIPPER







## THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

The Tatar invasion of Rus (1237-1240) and the loss of Jerusalem by the French and Italians (1244) are striking evidences of the crisis that affected the relations between Asia and Europe. between the Moslem and Christian worlds. Those events marked the end of the European colonization drive to the East. An opposite movement was observed: The Asiatic peoples began to gain increasing predominance over the European.

### 1



ALMOST the whole of the Russian plain up to the region of the Great Lakes was under the rule of the Golden Horde.<sup>1</sup> In the southeast of Europe Byzantium fell under the blows of the Osman Turks, and Bulgaria and Serbia were crushed. The conquerors continued to push forward, overpowered Hungary and then threatened Germany, Czecho-Moravia and Poland. From the time the Tatars adopted the Islamic faith

<sup>1</sup> Numbers in the text refer to the explanatory notes to be found at the back of this book.

(in the first half of the fourteenth century) the Moslem world—from the Ob to the Atlantic Ocean, and from the Oka to Hindustan—was a united religious entity, in striking contrast to Christian Europe, which was split up into different churches and denominations and into mutually hostile nations, states and cities. All this served to accelerate the latter's economic decline and the growth of chaos.

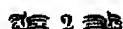
Predominance in the Moslem world was gained by the Sultan of Turkey. His supremacy was recognized by the descendents of the now decayed Golden Horde—the Tatar, Nogai and other Khaus and Mirzas, who continued to raid Russian territory, seizing grain and cattle, furs and other valuable merchandise, and even human merchandise, *i.e.*, slaves, whom they sold in the markets of Asia and Africa.

The Sultan achieved the goal to which the Turks had aspired since the eleventh century. He established himself in golden-domed Tsargrad (Constantinople) as the heir of the Romanic Caesar, and substituted the crescent for the cross over the dome of St. Sophia. Backed by a large standing army, far more formidable than any European state could dream of in those days, he was unquestionably the most powerful, one might say, the only emperor in the world. As the supreme Caliph, *i.e.*, the High Priest and the protector of the faithful, he was revered in the remote regions of Siberia, in Turkestan, Arabia Felix, African Tunis and in Morocco. Interesting information has come down to us from the time of Ivan Grozny to the effect that the people of Bokhara and the Nogais of the Volga complained to the Sultan that the Muscovites in Astrakhan were creating trouble for pilgrims on their way to the grave of Mahomet and appealed for his intercession. In a letter he addressed to the King of France, Suleiman II (1520-1566)<sup>2</sup> called himself King of Kings, Prince of Princes, the distributor of the crowns of the world, God's shadow in the two parts of the world and ruler of the Black Sea, the White Sea, Asia and Europe. At that time the Turks were the overlords of thirty kingdoms and a coast line of eight thousand miles.

The Europeans sustained exceptionally heavy loss in trade with the rich lands of the Orient which supplied spices, silk and ivory.

After establishing themselves in the Levant, the Turks deprived the Genoese and Venetian merchants of their ancient trading stations in the Crimea, Cyprus and Rhodes. They blocked the direct routes to Persia, Arabia, India and China. The Mediterranean became infested with corsairs. In 1517, Sultan Selim I<sup>st</sup> conquered Egypt and severed the last thread that connected Venice with the Orient. The price of non-European merchandise rose to a fabulous height, and gold flowed from Europe into the coffers of the fortunate conquerors who sat at the gate of the commerce of Asia.

The Asiatic peoples seemed to have penned the Europeans in a restricted territory and to have compelled them to impose restrictions upon their own internal lives. In the fifteenth century, Europe, impoverished and lacking gold, was torn by internecine strife. Having no outlet to other continents, the European peoples plundered each other. When the Hundred Years' War between England and France (1337-1453) drew to a close with such astonishingly barren results for both countries, the mercenary soldiery, unfit to engage in peaceful occupations, wasted their strength in civil strife. Such were the struggles of the "Armagnacs" and "Bourguignons" in France, and such was the endless strife in England known as the Wars of the Roses. In Bohemia the heroic Taborites, the armed peasants, first fought to protect the independence of their country from the encroachments of the German Crusaders and later waged a life-and-death struggle against the feudal landowners who were encroaching on their land. The same class war also developed in Hungary.



In dealing with "the secret of primitive accumulation" in Chapter XXVI of Volume I of *Capital*, Karl Marx gives us the exact chronological date which marked the beginning of the economic renaissance of Europe. "Although we come across the first beginnings of capitalist production as early as the 14th or 15th century, sporadically," he writes, "in certain towns of the Mediterranean, the capitalistic era dates from the 16th century."\*

\* *Capital*, Vol. I, p. 787, Charles H. Kerr edition.



The beginning of the new era in the economic and cultural life of Europe is strikingly marked by the facts of her outward expansion. Round about the year 1500, Europeans began to explore ways and means of extricating themselves from the vice in which they had been held by the Asiatic conquerors for two and a half centuries. The sixteenth century was the century of great discoveries, of the most powerful development of enterprise, and of extensive commerce between the countries of Europe.

The peoples of the Far West sought for round sea routes to the Far East, and every nation chose its own special sphere in these explorations. Seeking for the shortest route, the Portuguese rounded Africa and were the first to reach true and real India. The Spaniards, following in the footsteps of the Italian dreamer Columbus, came across a new continent and plunged their hands into the fabulous gold treasures of New India. The English, who started later than the rest, strove to the North, to go round Europe and Asia by a route opposite to that taken by the Portuguese. In the middle of the sixteenth century they founded the Merchant Adventurers' Company "for the discovery of Cathay, and diverse other regions, dominions, islands and places unknown." The first expedition undertaken by this company was the voyage of Richard Chancellor, who in 1553 entered the White Sea, later found himself in Moscow and established regular relations with the Moscow government.

Maritime voyages led the English to further land discoveries. It was soon observed in England that apart from its intrinsic importance for trade, Muscovy might serve as a point of transit to Central Asia; that it would be possible to reach Turkestan and Bokhara *via* the Northern Dvina, the Volga and the Caspian Sea, and from there India.

The same idea of a land route through Eastern Europe fired the imagination of the old leaders of commerce movements, the Venetians, Genoese and the Hanseatic Germans, who had been forced into the background by their more fortunate rivals who had chosen the stormy ocean as their element. The Genoese obtained from Vasili III<sup>4</sup> right of way along the Volga and the Caspian Sea to India. The Hanseatic merchants strove to revive their former influ-

ence in the Baltic Sea, and stretched out their hands to Moscow *via* Livonia.

Europe began to send out her most restless and unruly sons who had accumulated in such numbers; men of great talent, daring, unfit for settled and peaceful occupations, seekers after gold and rare commodities, ruthless, skilled soldiers and tireless "sea wolves." Such were the Portuguese d'Almeida and Albuquerque, the Spaniards Cortez and Pizarro, and the Englishmen Drake and Raleigh. They were followed by entrepreneurs of another type, the traders and bankers of old Europe; the big Genoese and Augsburg bankers, the Spinolas, Welsers and Fuggers, who acted in the capacity of financiers and agents of overseas trade. The Spanish government granted the Welsers for exploitation a whole region in South America, *viz.*, Venezuela. The Fuggers cornered the whole output of quicksilver in Spain for use in the American silver mines.

While the western peoples were absorbed in their overseas enterprises, Eastern Europe was engaged in a struggle against the peoples of the steppes and steadily enlarged its territorial possessions. The Polish-Lithuanian State seized the once flourishing but now utterly devastated lands of Kiev Rus, *viz.*, the black earth belt along the Dniester and the Dnieper. The Moscow State, which was formed between the Volga and the Oka, rapidly seized the territory between the middle and lower Volga, subjugated the Tatar, Finnish and Nogai tribes of the extensive southern plains, and advanced beyond the Oka to the Desna and the Don, the zone of the agricultural settlements. At the same time it began to push towards the seas. Under Ivan IV, the conqueror of the Volga region and the founder of the Russian navy, the Great Russian traders, colonizers and soldiers crossed the Kamen (the rocks, *i.e.*, the Ural Mountains) and established Russian Siberia.

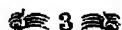
During this era of expansion, both Poland and Moscow produced remarkable statesmen: two Polish Kings and two Russian sovereigns, totally unlike each other—the two Sigismunds, I and II,<sup>5</sup> and the two Ivans, III<sup>6</sup> and IV<sup>7</sup> respectively. Ivan IV, known as Grozny, the contemporary of Elizabeth of England,<sup>8</sup> Philip II of Spain<sup>9</sup> and of William of Orange,<sup>10</sup> the leader of the Dutch Rev-

olution, was confronted with problems of military, administrative and international character similar to those that confronted the founders of the new European states, but under much more difficult circumstances. In his talent as a diplomat and organizer, he, perhaps, surpassed them all.

The Stroganovs<sup>11</sup> and Yermak,<sup>12</sup> the conquerors of Siberia, were in no way inferior to the Wolsers and Cortez; they belonged to the category of daring conquerors, who strove to acquire sources of metals and to explore and subjugate new lands.

The two European drives for expansion—the conquest of the two Indies overseas, and the struggle on land against the Turko-Tatar peoples, accompanied by the intensive development of vast tracts of vacant land—were closely interconnected. Crossing the Atlantic and Indian Oceans, the maritime peoples gained direct access to rare commodities: spices, ivory, porcelain pottery, silk, gold and silver. By selling these in the European market they raised the prices of all products and roused the envy of the other nations who occupied less favourable geographical positions. At the same time their enterprises drew many districts of Central and Eastern Europe into the orbit of commerce. Prussia, Livonia, Austria, Hungary, Poland, Lithuania, Novgorod and Moscow Rus supplied England, France, the Netherlands and Spain with grain, hides, furs, fats, timber, potash, honey and wax, which the maritime countries lacked.

On the western border, facing the ocean, a new, large, international centre sprang up, *viz.*, Antwerp, to which flowed the merchandise obtained in India, the manufactures of Flanders, France and England, and the raw materials of Eastern Europe. The attraction this city, situated at the outlet of the broad and deep Scheldt to the open sea, had for the Eastern Europeans can be judged by the terms of the treaty concluded by Ivan Grozny with Sweden in 1557, by which, in return for the right granted to Swedish merchants to travel unhindered through Moscow to India and China, the Moscow merchants were granted right of transit through Sweden to Spain, France, England, "Luhok and Antrop," *i.e.*, Antwerp.



In the sixteenth century the struggle between the Europeans and the Moslem people raged in full blast with sharply alternating success. In 1528-1531 Suleiman II, the Magnificent, besieged Vienna and conquered Hungary. In 1552-1556 Ivan IV subjugated the Volga region. To this great victory achieved by the Moscow State the Moslem world retaliated in 1569-1572 by a Turkish march on Astrakhan, and the burning of Moscow by the Crimean Tatars.

In their arduous and almost continuous wars against the mobile Asiatic horsemen, the East-European states copied many features of the military organization of their foes, and precisely those methods which had given the latter the advantage when they first appeared in European territory. They even employed the man power of their formidable enemy; from the middle of the fifteenth century, numerous Tatar princes, together with their entourage, took up service with the Moscow State. The Grand Princes enticed them with offers of rich rewards, included them among the aristocracy of their courts, granted them estates, formed them into detachments for protecting military frontiers, and did all in their power to sustain the military ardour of these mounted detachments, torn as they were out of their native element. Later, the mobile horsemen of the Great Russian Militia and of the Ukrainian volunteer forces appeared on the broad border steppes, first as defence forces, and later for attacking the Moslem world.

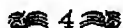
Two great powers, Turkey and Muscovy, almost simultaneously worked out for themselves analogous forms and institutions of military organization. In Turkey the spahi, life owners of small estates, were obliged to appear at the Sultan's summons together with a definite number of horsemen, graded according to the revenues they derived from their estates. At the end of the fifteenth century the Moscow government began to introduce the pomestye, or manorial system, under which estate owners were obliged to appear at mustering centres when summoned with "horse, men and arms." To ensure that this warrior class should not dwindle, but grow, and to encourage the training of new cadres, the government granted estates to

"novices," *i.e.*, to the sons of landowners on reaching a definite age and on their entering military service.

In view of the enormous length of the front they had to hold, stretching from the Alps almost to the Altai, and the impossibility of erecting a continuous barrier in the form of a wall or earthwork, the East-European states, and the Moscow State in particular, were obliged to build fortified towns, castles and forts all along the line that was open to attack. Often wars consisted in defending fortresses and in resisting besieging troops, and this gave rise to the necessity of acquiring efficient artillery.

The sixteenth century is distinguished for the progress made in the technique of war and, in particular, for improvements in firearms. In addition to heavy artillery, *i.e.*, cannon, light artillery appeared in the shape of the arquebus. At the same time a new type of infantry, the "fire archers" or musketeers, came into being.

In Ivan IV's Kazan and Astrakhan campaigns (1552-1556) the foot artillery, the *Streletsi*, though still small in number, nevertheless represented an important force. During Yermak's conquest of Siberia the arquebus played a decisive role in the fighting against the numerous natives who were unacquainted with the use of firearms. The siege and capture of fortresses—the storming of Belgrade (1521) and the siege of Vienna by the Turks (1529), the capture of Kazan by Ivan IV (1552), the fall of Polotsk on two occasions, the city passing from the hands of Lithuania to those of Moscow (1563) and back again (1579), the fierce assaults on Reval by the Russians during the Livonian War (1558-1582) and the siege of Pskov by Bathori<sup>13</sup> (1581-1582)—are characteristic and remarkable episodes in the military history of those times. One of the most effective innovations of those days—the undermining and blowing up of city walls with gunpowder—decided the fate of Kazan in 1552.



It might have been expected that in the struggle against so formidable a foe, the East-European states would have evinced a desire to unite, but this was not the case. On the contrary, there was



TSAR AND GRAND PRINCE IVAN VASILYEVICH OF ALL THE RUSSIAS  
*Miniature taken from the TITULYARNIK, or Genealogy of the  
 Tsars 1672*



more friction and rivalry among them than alliances and agreements. Denmark, Prussia, Livonia, Poland, Lithuania, Austria, Hungary and Muscovy (through Novgorod and Narva), each tried to snatch their share of the golden booty that flowed from the Indies and America. The acquisition of trade monopolies and privileges, and the seizure of maritime ports and straits became almost the main object of foreign policy.

Curious couples, now joining and now parting, were formed by the states of Eastern Europe in pursuit of their respective aims. Austria first united and then competed with Hungary; Poland with Lithuania; Lithuania with Muscovy. These groupings were constantly intercrossed by dynastic claims. The princes of the German Imperial House claimed the Polish throne; the Polish-Lithuanian Jagiello sought the crowns of Hungary and Bohemia, which formed part of the domain of the Austrian Hapsburgs; the Moscow Tsar, who regarded himself as the legitimate sovereign of "All the Russias," put forward his claim to Lithuania, half of which consisted of ancient Russian lands. These claims, in turn, led to rivalry between Muscovy and Poland, and at the same time to an alliance between the Moscow dynasty and the Austrian Hapsburgs, the other opponent of the Polish-Lithuanian State. Subsequently, this alliance opened the road to Moscow for the international policy of the Roman Papal Curia.

In the sixteenth century the European states were enmeshed in a complicated tangle of international relations. It may be said that from the time of the fall of the Byzantine Empire (1453), diplomacy in Europe became an art par excellence. The governments chose for their missions to foreign courts men of exceptional experience and possessing diverse technical knowledge. They were expected to provide information not only about the plans and designs of the higher circles at the courts to which they were accredited, but also about the internal life of the respective countries, the occupations, habits and customs of the people, the wealth of the respective countries, the state of industry, and the conflicts of political parties. This increased demand for skilled diplomats gave rise to a special school and science. The ambassadors and agents attached to diplomatic missions in



the sixteenth century were often distinguished chroniclers, geographers, ethnographers, historians, publicists and keen observers of a people's mentality. Such, for example, were Herherstein and Fletcher, whose works provide us with a fairly complete picture of the Moscow State at the beginning and at the end of the sixteenth century.

As this was the period of humanism in the West, the period of obsession with models of the world of antiquity, of intense study of Greek and Roman authors, it is natural to find traces of classicism in the western books of travel and descriptions of countries of that period; but admiration of Greek and Roman antiquity also penetrated Moscow. At the Court of Ivan IV we find a most unexpected geneological tree—the Moscow Tsars traced their descent to the legendary Prus,<sup>14</sup> the brother of Augustus Caesar. The scholars who drew up this geneological tree rendered the autocracy a priceless service by exalting the name and prestige of the Moscow Tsar over the rest of the European kings and rulers.

In the new political world of Europe the Moscow government was obliged to develop not only military-administrative talents, but also skill in cabinet conflicts. The formidable Tsar, his collaborators and pupils performed this difficult role with dignity. They had their own scholarship, traditions and an original method of argument. True, they adhered to the more ancient school of "Byzantine writing" and still lacked the polish of secular rational science which had penetrated the western universities from humanistic literary circles; but when necessary, they could staunchly defend the rights and claims of their country, and they handled historical references and the testimony of the ancient chronicles with a skill that, perhaps, nobody else in Europe possessed.

### 35 5 35

The colonizing movement in both directions—overseas and into the interior of the steppes—the arming of large masses of horsemen and the growing commercial rivalry among the European states were all closely connected with the profound changes that were taking place in the social and political life of Europe.



IVAN GROZNY IN HIS YOUTH

*A miniature by a Kazan chronicler of the XVII century. In the  
Public Library in Leningrad*



One of the most important facts in the social life of the sixteenth century was the entry upon the historical scene in all European countries of the landowning, or manorial nobility.

Although the titles Prince, Count, Baron, Marquis and the very term nobility are of very ancient origin and belong to the early periods of feudalism, in the sixteenth century these terms served to indicate the complete change that had taken place in the character of the feudal class, which, in composition as well as in their customs—economic and juridical—differed very sharply from the Knights of the Middle Ages. In France, for example, only a small section of the nobility could boast of descent from the Knights Crusaders. The vast majority of them were *men* in the king's service, and were indebted to the king for their elevation. Similarly, in the Moscow State, the nobles and sons of boyars,<sup>15</sup> chosen from the middle and even lower strata of society, who began to own manors at the end of the fifteenth century, had little in common with the former *druzhinniki*, or royal bodyguard, of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries either in the character of their service or in their status in the state.

The nobility completely discarded the traditions of the semi-ruined, economically inert knights and *druzhinniki*. A new type of feudal aristocracy arose in a milieu of widely developing commerce and took an active part in the economic life of its times.

G. F. Kuapp, the founder of the school for studying the history of the European peasantry, noted that it was in the sixteenth century that the Prussian Junkers were first infected with the fever of gain. This characterization of a new economic type and order given by a conservative scholar in an antiquated romantic style may be translated into the more prosaic language of definite historical facts and applied to the nobility of other European countries.

The new class, the vehicle of a more progressive economic system, began to arise earlier in some countries and later in others, in conformity with the degree to which the given country had been drawn into commerce and its markets for agricultural produce such as grain, flax, wool, hides, etc., had expanded. The businessman-nobleman, the squire-entrepreneur, was first observed in the two

countries of the extreme West—England and France— as early as the fourteenth century. In the fifteenth century this type appeared in Denmark, in Northeastern Germany, in Czecho-Moravia, Hungary, Poland and Livonia. In the sixteenth century it appeared in Sweden, Lithuania and the Moscow State.

In the earlier period of the Middle Ages the knights lived on the traditional payments in kind made by the dependent peasants and on the rents drawn from small tenants. They obtained additional revenues by inflicting fines and imposing dues for milling flour, distilling spirits, etc. Now, at the beginning of the sixteenth century, the new commercial policy and the profit obtained from the sale of agricultural and livestock produce in the home and foreign market gave a mighty impetus to the growth of agriculture in the agrarian countries of Central and Eastern Europe, which began to ship their produce to the industrial and maritime countries of the West. The owners of land held in fief could not but realize what a vast source of profit they possessed. They began either to engage in farming on their own account and to enlarge their home farms by enclosing their peasants' lands, cultivating hitherto vacant land and buying additional land to round off their estates, or to drive their small tenants who paid the traditional low rents off the land *en masse* and replace them with fewer big capitalist farmers and thus greatly raise the price of their land.

Thus, although in rough outline as yet, was moulded the figure of the manorial landlord as he was known in the last century of the feudal period. In the sixteenth century the nobility feverishly purchased estates, became shrewd entrepreneurs, tried to squeeze the utmost profit out of their operations and often acted as village usurers. In the Baltic countries the barons and knights steadily tried to evade military service, drove the peasants from the market, cut off their trade with the towns and began to sell agricultural produce to the towns and in the big overseas markets on their own account. The Danish nobility openly violated the ancient privileges of the towns and prohibited the burghers from trading in grain and cattle. They established direct relations with Holland and the Hansatic League and built their own ships on which to export country produce abroad.



The sixteenth century was the Golden Age of the nobility, the age of their progress and surging, intense activity. From their ranks sprang navigators and colonizers, seekers of trade routes, explorers and conquerors of non-European countries, the condottieri, publicists, orators, historians, agricultural experts, writers of romances, divines and philosophers.

Not in all countries was the position they held in political life the same. Although they had risen with the royal upper class in every country, in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, however, they secured a limitation of the royal power in some countries, while in others they served as the instrument for the establishment of absolute monarchy. The former occurred in those countries where, for different reasons, all categories of the nobility, from the big land magnates to the small squires, organized themselves in powerful corporations which protected their class privileges. The latter occurred in those countries where the monarchy retained the leadership over the mass of middle and minor nobility and where, relying on these masses as a military and administrative body, it defeated the big feudal aristocracy which had lagged behind the national and political development of the age.

A particularly striking form of aristocratic organization of the nobility which had thrown off the leadership of the monarchy was observed in the Baltic and Carpathian countries, and also in the small German principalities such as Pomerania, Mecklenburg, Prussia and Livonia, and also in Poland and Hungary. On the other hand, the organization of the nobility by the power of the autocratic monarch is most distinctly observed in the Moscow State.

The most important privilege which the nobility in the first mentioned group of countries gained for themselves was the transformation of their conventional ownership of their domains in the form of fiefs into their complete and unrestricted private property. In Livonia, the nobility acquired this privilege easily by means of the charters they succeeded in wringing from the bishops and Orders, which had become quite powerless at the time the Refor-

mation began. This most important legal change, which took place simultaneously in a number of countries in Central Europe, was a violation of medieval customary law and was based on Roman Law, which was alien to local traditions, recognized no restrictions on private property, and regarded the owner as "lord of his domain." It is not surprising that the Baltic Knights, the Polish *Szlachta*, or squires, and the Hungarian aristocracy sent their sons to the humanistic universities to study law and engaged learned jurists, experts in Roman Law, to draw up their aristocratic codes in which privileged inherited property was exalted, while the peasantry were placed on a par with the serf *coloni* of ancient Rome and proclaimed the immovable property of the gentry.

Extremely characteristic of this evolution of aristocratic usurpation and legal deception is that, simultaneously with the consolidation of the law of private property in land, the nobility emphatically repudiated all obligations to the state, and primarily the obligation to perform military service, which at one time had been the sole ground of possession of their fiefs. At the same time, the nobility worked out parliamentary forms favourable for themselves, drafted aristocratic constitutions, filled Diets and Landtags with their representatives, and pushed the representatives of the town population into the background, or eliminated them entirely from the representative assemblies.

After drafting republican constitutions, the nobility came into power and took control of the legislature. This was of decisive importance in determining the fate of the peasantry. The nobility legalized the measures of non-economic coercion they had applied to the peasantry in order to increase the productive capacity of their domains, increase their profits and gain predominance in the market. Forced labour of the most arduous kind and stern punishment for flight from an overlord or for shirking, were endorsed by the laws passed by Polish *Szlachta* Diets already at the end of the fifteenth and the beginning of the sixteenth centuries.

In striking contrast to the aristocratic republics of Central Europe (Bohemia, Hungary, Poland and Prussia), were the structure and policy of the Moscow State. The latter grew up in the course

of continuous and arduous struggles against the Golden Horde and its successors. The principal concern of its rulers was to gather together and unite the lands of Russia, to abolish appanages<sup>16</sup> and to eradicate separatism. It pursued this policy by developing a centralized administration, and particularly by building up an armed force that was to serve as an instrument for the further expansion and consolidation of the state. It achieved this aim by organizing the nobility in the form of a military and administrative class to serve as a bulwark of the monarchy. In the Moscow State the nobility was subject to juridical norms quite different from those which prevailed in the aristocratic republics of Central Europe. Here they could not wring from the ruler any "liberties" or privileges; they could not convert their fiefs, the conventional ownership of their domains at the will of the sovereign, into their private property, nor base their prosperity on the principles of slave-owning Roman Law. From the time of Dmitri Donskoi,<sup>17</sup> the Grand Princes of Moscow were military leaders. In the sixteenth century the Moscow Tsar was still the head of a military monarchy.

At the end of the fifteenth century the Moscow government began to introduce the manorial system, the system of granting land only in temporary, restricted ownership, conditioned by continuous and undeviating service. This system was pursued with strict consistency. The government did not permit the arbitrary enclosure of lands, did not give the lord of the manor a completely free hand in utilizing the land of his domain, did not permit him to allow it to go to rack and ruin, kept the landowner under control, transferred him from one region to another at its own discretion, increased his domain according to merit, and deprived him of his manor and banished him if he committed abuses.



In those countries where the nobility came into power and acquired liberties and privileges, and also in those countries where that class constituted a powerful opposition to the monarchy, it produced talented publicists, who propounded the theory of liber-



alism, sang the praises of republican freedom, the constitutional system and parliamentarism, condemned despotism and absolute monarchy, thundered against the tyranny of the "one and only" ruler, and sometimes even advocated tyrannicide. This trend of political thought found reflection even in historiography in so far as the latter emanated from aristocratic quarters. In this literature, every attempt on the part of the monarch to pursue a policy favourable for the middle and lower classes was sharply criticized. Monarchical demagoguery was appraised as the worst sort of tyranny, as villainy, and as a crime against the state.

Such a sinister figure, according to the aristocratic historians, was Christian II of Denmark (1513-1523). He lived in the memory of subsequent generations under the sobriquet of "Nero of the North," as the culprit of the "Stockholm Massacre," *i.e.*, the execution of the Swedish aristocrats who rebelled against him. The publicists and historians belonging to the same class in Denmark and in other European countries endeavoured to attribute general political significance to this "atrocious," to bring discredit on the name of the king and to overshadow all his other activities by this gruesome deed. Their resentment is quite intelligible. In the period of the social and economic ascendancy of the nobility, Christian II tried to introduce royal, classless free courts; he dared to combat piracy on the high seas to which the knights in the coastal districts, among them bishops of aristocratic origin, were so passionately devoted. It is not surprising that, subsequently, when deposed by the two upper classes—the clergy and the nobility—Christian II was lying in prison, the peasants and burghers who rose in revolt under the leadership of the Lübeck demagogue Wullenweber, proclaimed him, a captive, their king.

Shortly before his fall, Christian II issued over the head of the Diet a decree which contained the following words, unheard of in aristocratic society before: "There must be no sale of men of peasant calling; this evil and un-Christian custom which prevails to this day in Zeeland, Friesland and other places, of selling and granting as gifts poor husbandmen and Christians like dumb cattle, must henceforth cease." This decree remained a dead letter, but it served

as a testament for the enlightened despotism that came into being two centuries later. Its author was kept in close confinement for many years, until the day of his death in 1559.

Needless to say, the social and political conditions that arose in the Moscow State provided much less ground for the rise of an anti-monarchist literature. Here the monarchy not only prevented the amalgamation of the middle and minor nobility with the aristocracy; it utilized the nobility, organized as a military and administrative class, for the purpose of combating the "knyazhata,"<sup>18</sup> or descendants of former sovereign princes, and the old boyars. This explains the favourable opinion of the monarchy expressed in the Moscow literature, strikingly illustrated in two productions of the middle of the sixteenth century which have come down to us, viz., the pamphlet-petitions of Ivan Peresvetov and Yermolai-Erasmus.

From the period of Ivan Grozny there has come down to us another tradition which sprang from the conservative aristocracy which was crushed by the monarchy. It finds expression in the works of Prince A. M. Kurbski, in the "Discourse of the Balaam Miracle Workers," in the tales and descriptions of the annalists and in the reminiscences of the contemporaries of the great peasant war, which in previous histories has been named the "time of troubles." It was these representatives of an obsolete ideology who provided the material for depicting Ivan Grozny as a tyrant, as a crowned miscreant and criminal, who, like Christian II of Denmark, deserved the appellation of "The Sixteenth-Century Nero."

Strangely enough, this tradition, which had been inspired by the vindictiveness of the romanticists who had bewailed the fate of the aristocracy, survived the great achievements of the sixteenth century, eclipsed the opinions of the more progressive contemporaries of Ivan IV, and strongly influenced the historians of the nineteenth century. In the old textbooks this stern Tsar was depicted mainly as a cruel tyrant. All his great deeds were relegated to the background; the great service he rendered in expanding and internally organizing the Moscow State and in combating treason were allowed to sink into oblivion.

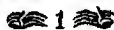
The Russian people's appraisal of Ivan IV's personality was entirely different. By formulating their appraisal in the appellation "Grozny" they exhibited profound wisdom. In foreign historical literature the meaning of this appellation has been utterly distorted by its translation as "Iwan der Schreckliche," "Jean le Terrible," or "Ivan the Terrible," thus emphasizing the accusation that Ivan IV was cruel. In the great Moscow State in the sixteenth century, however, the term "Grozny" had a majestic and patriotic ring. This appellation had been previously applied to Ivan III. Both grandfather and grandson were mighty and menacing, formidable and dangerous to the enemies of the people and of the state at home and abroad.





## IVAN III's LEGACY

Of all the European nations, it was the Great Russian nation, organized in the Moscow State, which displayed most skill and energy in combating the Asiatic warriors. Perhaps it was the very difficulty of the task, the extremely menacing situation that existed on the southeastern borders, that gave rise to the school which was so noted for its amazing political and military achievements, and for the firmness and consistency with which it pursued its goal.



IN THE COURSE of continuous fighting to repel the attacks of external foes from the West, in Europe, and from the East, in Asia, Moscow built up institutions which had much in common with the strategy, armaments, fortifications, road systems and administrative practice of the great Asiatic empires. This was not a sign of retrogression, a reversion to the cruder methods of barbarism. It must not be forgotten that the great Asiatic continent was the arena of a culture that was more ancient than the European; that during the early

Middle Ages, from the eight to the fourteenth centuries, Asia far surpassed Europe in wealth, commerce, manufactures and enlightenment. The Arabs taught the Romano-Germans the art of commerce, science and philosophy. The Mongols introduced Chinese artillery in Europe, and later the system of state roads and mail carrying, which they themselves had inherited from the more ancient states.

To the forms borrowed from the enemy, the Moscow State, in the course of time, added its own original institutions, built up, however, on the same lines of a centralized military monarchy. Hence the similarity, in some respects, between Muscovy and the Ottoman Empire, the last great creation of the Asiatic warriors who gained predominance in the Levant. Both Russian and western observers were struck by the similarity between Muscovy and Turkey. In the plan for the suppression of the aristocracy and the introduction of an untrammelled administration which he submitted to the Moscow government in the period of Ivan IV's youth, Ivan Peresvetov pointed to the system practised by the Turkish Sultan Mohammed,<sup>10</sup> which he regarded as exemplary.

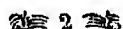
Foreigners regarded the similarity between Muscovy and Turkey as the main ground for their attacks on the Russian system. An anonymous French liberal writer of the period of Ivan Grozny's Oprichnina (Life Guards) observed that institutions for protecting the law and defending the people from tyranny existed in all countries except Muscovy and Turkey. The English observers Horsey and Fletcher also harped on this theme. Failing to understand the Moscow system of administration, they described it as a despotism guided by caprice, often bordering on perverseness, and meeting with no opposition in the "barbarous" society which fully deserved such a system of administration.

Nevertheless, there were institutions in this "Oriental despotism" which roused the envy of the West-Europeans and fired their imaginations. Such were the building of roads and the mail service, which helped to keep the regions which had not yet been fully subdued under observation, and also the system of dispatching diplomatic notes and envoys to foreign courts, which distinguished

the Moscow State from all the European states of that time. The speed of travelling and the splendour of the equipages employed astonished foreigners. Herberstein stated that his servant travelled six hundred *vershs* from Novgorod to Moscow in seventy-two hours, and was able to travel without a halt thanks to the frequent changing of horses, which he received in unlimited number. When he called for twelve horses the ostlers brought him thirty, and even more. The government fully appreciated the value of this instrument of administration. In his testament to his children, Ivan III urged them to preserve the *yamas* (*yama*—post station) and stage coaches on the roads which had been opened during his reign. At the opening of the Livonian War Ivan Grozny had at his command a splendidly organized official postal service, which a Nürnberg newspaper, in 1561, described in the following terms of admiration expressed by a diplomatic mission which had just returned from Moscow: "In Livonia, near Reval and Riga, the Tsar has agents who bring him information to Moscow within five days, so that the Court of Moscow is kept informed about all that which takes place in the Baltic, and is able closely to watch affairs in Western Europe."

There is another feature of the military organization that prevailed in Moscow in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries which attracts our attention, and which was also noted by foreigners. We refer to the systematic preparations for big campaigns that were made in conformity with a widely conceived plan. For these campaigns military forces were called up in good time from the remote provinces and border regions, arms and stocks of provisions were concentrated at definite centres, and so forth. A number of operations that were prepared for in order to strike the enemy a crushing military blow and to deprive him of more territory bear evidence of the strategical methods, characteristic of Moscow, of building fortresses on the very frontiers, and even in enemy territory. Thus, in 1492 Ivan III built Ivungorod, opposite the Livonian town of Narva, in preparation for the occupation of the Finnish coast, which was undertaken by his grandson Ivan IV

sixty-six years later. Ivan III's successors moved up to Kazan by the same methods. Vasili III built Vassilsunk, and Ivan IV built Sviyazhsk. Having in view the subjugation of the Western Dvina region, the Moscow voyevodas, in 1535, built another Ivangorod on the Sebez, and in 1536-1537 they built Zavolochye and Velizh. When the armistice was concluded with Lithuania the fortresses were ceded to the latter as structures erected on alien territory. Later, after depriving Lithuania of the Polotsk region, Ivan Grozny restored these fortifications, which had formerly belonged to Moscow. These systematic building operations show that the Court of Moscow worked out its plans of conquest long before the respective campaigns were launched, and that it undoubtedly had maps upon which to work. (In one of the documents in the diplomatic correspondence conducted with Denmark we come across the word "cosinography.")



In Moscow, Oriental traditions were interwoven with the old classical school, which the Great Russians took over in a Byzantine dressing. As the zealous guardians of Greek scholarship in Rus, the clergy absorbed Byzantine literature and arranged their own lives and the lives of their flocks in conformity with Byzantine law, the authority of which they treated with the greatest reverence. In 1531, during the trial of the Prince and scholar Vassyan Patrikeyev, who had taken monastical vows, the Metropolitan Daniel, in whose opinion the accused had sinned gravely in interpreting the *Kormchaya Kniga*, i.e., the Nomocanon,<sup>20</sup> the Byzantine Ecclesiastical Code, too freely, uttered the following remarkable words: "From that book no man could change or alter anything from the Seventh Council to the conversion of Rus; and in our land this book has preserved the church and has saved Christians for five hundred years, and has never been shaken by anyone down to the time of our present Tsar and Grand Prince Vasili Ivanovich."

Acting as the ideal counsellor of the supreme power, and training its pupils to act as secretaries and counsellors for the govern-

ment, the clergy served as a vehicle of the juridical concepts and administrative wisdom of Byzantium. The Ecclesiastical Code (the *Nomocanon*, or *Kormchaya Kniga*) which in itself contained numerous civil laws, was supplemented in the libraries of the scholarly hierarchs with a collection of the most diverse secular rules and legal regulations from various periods of Byzantium, ranging from the fourth to the twelfth centuries. What was there not in this collection? In addition to the *Kormchaya Kniga*, they copied the so-called Code of Constantine the Great, the Code of Justinian, the "Agricultural Law," the "Eclogue" of the Iconoclasts, Leo the Isaurian and Constantine Copronymus, the Laws of Leo the Philosopher, Basil the Macedonian's "Prochiron," which even bore the Russified title of "Gradskey Zakon" (City Law), and the tales of the Kings Isaac, Alexius and Manuel Comneni. This was a voluminous and very convenient reference book and, at the same time, served as an authoritative pillar of support and source of inspiration for the legislators.

Byzantine law was studied with extraordinary thoroughness. Every letter was treasured, and the text was analyzed with truly philological keenness and acumen. For example, Vassyan, an advocate of the ascetic theory that the clergy should live in poverty, zealously searched the Greek originals for proof that monastical life was incompatible with wealth and the ownership of large estates. He closely examined every clause of the law to ascertain how to interpret the Greek words *agros* and *proasteion*, which had been translated into Russian by the word "selo" (village), and after thorough examination he arrived at the conclusion that they were to be interpreted as meaning not patrimonial estates peopled by peasants, but as small plots of land cultivated by the monks themselves.

In the second half of the fifteenth century the Byzantine codes, annals, historical chronicles and the works of divines were studied in the Moscow State with exceptional diligence. Like their western Romano-German confrères, the Moscow intelligentsia passed through something in the nature of a Renaissance, but while in the West the writers of the earlier classical period were closely studied, Rus remained faithful to her medieval Byzantine teachers. The hu-



manists of Rus and the West resembled each other, however, in their high appreciation of the neo-Greek scholars, whom they regarded as a living, Balkan fragment of the world of antiquity. While in Italy, Bessarion and Gemistus Pletho were treated with the profoundest respect as experts in ancient Greek literature, Maxim the Greek<sup>21</sup> was invited to come from Athos to Moscow, and during his stay in Rus, beginning with 1518, he acted as the guide of scholarly interest and the centre of animated philosophical and ecclesiastical controversy.

Ivan III's methods of administration reveal the considerable influence that was exercised by Byzantine models and precedents, about which he learned from the Moscow scholars who had studied them. Only a highly schooled group of lawyers could have edited such codes as the Grand Prince's Code of 1497<sup>22</sup> and the Tsar's Code of 1550.<sup>23</sup> Foreigners who were inclined to regard all the customs of the Muscovites as barbarous were surprised to find that the Moscow codes were great works of culture, distinguished for their clarity, conciseness and thoroughness. When describing Muscovy as he found it during his visit in 1525, Herberstein deemed it necessary to quote excerpts from the Code of Ivan III, but he forgot to add that at that time there was nothing like it in his own native land, Germany, or anywhere else in the West. There the judges groaned under the weight of abstruse and uncoded laws and regulations of different periods, which they vainly tried to piece together and master by straining their memories to recall their studies of Roman Law during their university days.

Moscow jurisprudence particularly astonished Englishmen as they recalled the jurisprudence that prevailed in their own country, where it was built up on precedents of former cases, the records of which were kept in the archives, where the English judges and lawyers were obliged to have capacious memories, and where, as a consequence, a large class of professional lawyers came into being. Chancellor, the first Englishman to visit and describe Muscovy, considered that the Russian system of jurisprudence was commendable because, as he wrote, "they [the Russians] have no man of law to plead their causes in any court; but every man



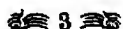
TSAR IVAN IV

*A miniature on a document. 1571. State Historical Museum,  
Moscow*



pleads his own cause and gives bill and answer in writing, *contrary to the order in England*" (my italics—R. W.).

The principles of the philosophy of law of antiquity, with which Byzantine law is permeated, also influenced the Moscow jurists, and through them other circles of the reading public. It was from the repositories of Roman Law that the idea of the natural, innate rights of man, were taken, and which every publicist of the sixteenth century interpreted in his own way. In the endeavour to defend the boyars' right to absent themselves from Court, Kurbski wrote of the unpraiseworthy conduct of the Tsar who had "imprisoned the land of Russia, namely, free human nature, as in a hellish dungeon." Peresvetov vehemently demanded the abolition of slavery, and regarded the granting of freedom to men as the realization of that "truth" which in his eyes was far higher than "faith," i.e., dogmas. He conceived of an ideal ruler, the incarnation of whom, he claimed, was the Turkish Sultan Mohammed, who in liberating men from bondage and converting them into his Guard, had performed the will of God. Peresvetov wrote a parable which had some resemblance to the Faust legend. He related how the Devil tempted Adam after his expulsion from Eden, and inducing him to pledge himself to him, robbed him of his freedom. God was moved to pity Adam. He rescued him from Hell and released him from his pledge. From this Peresvetov drew the moral that any man who induced another to pledge himself to him, i.e., who enslaved another, was serving the Devil. Lastly, the heretical rationalist Matvei Bashkin held the opinion that slavery was contrary to Christian doctrine, which, in his eyes, was identical with reason.



Undoubtedly, the task of the Moscow rulers was greatly facilitated by favourable external conditions, circumstances over which they had no control. Operating in their favour was Moscow's superb geographical position, which converted it into a powerful centre of attraction. They had the advantage of an uninterrupted dynasty. And lastly they were backed by an influential and enlight-

cned body in the shape of the clergy. But fortune does not favour those who are unable to take advantage of favourable conditions, i.e., those who lack political sagacity.

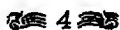
The rulers of Muscovy were able to take full advantage of their favourable position. It would be difficult to find another state system which provided such opportunities for utilizing the different classes of society for the purpose of achieving a definite goal. None of the European sovereigns of the sixteenth century were capable of carrying out a military mobilization on the scale carried out by Ivan IV at the beginning of the Livonian War, when masses of horsemen were moved to the Baltic coast from the Volga, from the Nogai steppes, and even from the Terek.

Confidence in the methods employed and extraordinary perseverance in pursuit of given objects were displayed exceptionally in foreign relations. Here everything was clear and definite long before: the theory of government, title, claims, skill in conducting negotiations with foreigners, and consciousness of the dignity of the state backed by references to works on history and divinity. The Moscow government unhesitatingly advanced its claim to rule over the whole of Rus: Kiev, Smolensk and Polotsk were regarded as the "patrimony"<sup>24</sup> of the Moscow sovereigns, who well remembered their descent from Monomachus.<sup>25</sup> With the aid of the annals, which were constantly taken from the state archives, they established beyond question that Dorpat was the Russian town of Yuryev, built in the eleventh century by Yaroslav,<sup>26</sup> whose Christian name was Yuri.

In recording the extremely comprehensive instructions which Ivan III gave the Russian envoys to the Pope in 1499, a prominent historian of the nineteenth century makes the following admission: "Leaving nothing to chance, these Muscovites studied all the special circumstances appertaining to their case, examined everything from every possible angle, applied firmly established principles, introduced their firmly remembered traditions, pursued definite aims, and were always exclusively concerned with safeguarding and strengthening their magnificent position."

It is not surprising that the Jesuit Pirling, who wrote the above words, arrived at this conclusion. Throughout his book, which covers about one hundred and fifty years of diplomatic relations between Rome and Moscow, he is virtually obliged to depict under various guises one and the same conflict that raged between the two rivals, in which the advantage was always on the side of the one whom it was the custom to regard as barbarian. The Moscow sovereign appealed to the Pope on important matters that had given rise to diplomatic complications and tried to obtain his support. In doing so he roused in the Pope's heart the strongest hope that Moscow would submit to Rome. More than once the Pope was tempted by the alluring plan for a union with the Orient, hoping, in his turn, to dazzle the "Muscovite" with a brilliant crown. But every time he attempted to execute his plan he suffered defeat, meeting with a cool reception in Moscow, and the self-confidence of a sovereign who stood in no need of a superior authority. West-European diplomacy was discomfited by the "uncivilized" Muscovites.

The far too simplified and superficial conception of the cultural backwardness of the Russians in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries must be abandoned. Although backward in their technique, it cannot possibly be said that they were backward in politics. It was precisely these two centuries that produced in the persons of Ivan III (1462-1505) and Ivan IV (1533-1584) two brilliant organizers and leaders of one of the greatest states of their times.



If anybody throughout the medieval history of the Russian state deserved to be called Great, it was Ivan III. The forms of administration that we find in sixteenth-century Moscow: higher consultative bodies, government departments (*prikazy*), the manorial system and a definite order of service, a regular system of taxation, jurisprudence, theory of government, the ceremony of crowning, and even the title "Tsar," can all be traced to him. Ivan III—the founder, the organizer, the inventor of the institu-

tions and the machinery of government—was keen, shrewd, resourceful, tactful and flexible. He never neglected trifles. He was able to bend everything to the task of exalting the concept of state and the state system. In betrothing his daughter to the Grand Prince of Lithuania, he strongly exhorted her to remain faithful to the Orthodox Church, and drew up detailed instructions to her entourage on how to behave in church and at court, for they were to represent the Moscow State abroad, and it was their duty to preserve its dignity!

In the reign of Ivan III the circle of international relations was defined, and the line of conduct in relation to each European state was laid down, *i.e.*, the policy to be pursued in relation to the Pope, the German Emperor, Hungary, Turkey, Denmark, Sweden, Prussia, Poland and Livonia. In the opinion of the Court of Moscow, there could be no perpetual peace but only a truce with the Polish-Lithuanian State, as that western neighbour unjustly held Russian land, the "patrimony of the Moscow sovereign," which Moscow could never renounce. Livonia was not regarded as an independent country. Therefore, negotiations could not be conducted with her government as between equal powers. With Sweden the sovereign of Moscow did not deign to treat personally; that was the business of the Lieutenant-Governor of Novgorod, who governed the region bordering on Sweden. Most curious were the relations with Denmark, Turkey and the Pope, the maintenance of friendly ties with whom were of importance for the Moscow State.

Moscow became friendly with Denmark in the course of her drive to the Baltic. Even during Ivan III's war for Livonia there was already clear evidence of a desire to complete a task that was commenced with the subjugation of Novgorod in 1478, *viz.*, to eliminate the Hanseatic merchants, who controlled all the trade with Russian territory, and to open direct commercial intercourse with the West. Of the countries adjacent to the Baltic Sea, Poland and Sweden were the open rivals of Moscow. With remote Denmark, however, accommodation was possible, and an alliance with her was particularly important because that country was situated

at the other end of that narrow Baltic Sea. In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries Denmark, possessing Schonia at the southern extreme end of the Scandinavian Peninsula, was a real straits state. (Sund and the two Belts.) Vanquishing the Hanscatic League after a long struggle, she imposed a tax on all ships leaving the Baltic Sea. This provided a considerable portion of her revenues, and she was always in a position to close the main straits—the Sund—the “gate to the sea,” as the Moscow diplomats called them.

Ivan III fully appreciated the importance of establishing friendly relations with Denmark. In 1493 he concluded a treaty with the Danish King, and after this diplomatic act he closed and demolished the Hanse quarters in Novgorod, evidently counting on being able at an early date to establish direct commercial relations with the West without the agency of the Hanscatic merchants. It is interesting to note that already at that time the project arose of the sovereign of Moscow contracting a marriage with a Danish Princess.

The diplomatic correspondence between the Court of Moscow and Denmark, which is preserved in the Copenhagen archives, is extremely interesting. It reveals, first of all, the consistency, firmness and clarity of the foreign policy of the Moscow State. How comprehensive, for example, is the offensive and defensive alliance against Sweden and Poland of 1516! In it the Court of Moscow carefully drafted all the terms governing coordinated military operations, defined frontiers (at that time Christian II, King of Denmark, was planning to seize the Swedish crown and would, if successful, have become the neighbour of the Moscow State), and the stipulations for the right of transit for ambassadors, for the freedom of movement of “guests, merchants and other men of affairs,” and for the extradition of debtors and criminals.

The new western ally treated Moscow with great consideration. The Danish government deemed it necessary to have the agents it contemplated sending to Moscow taught Russian. In a diplomatic note we find the request for teachers to be chosen from among the clergy, and in an answering note mention is made of a “Doctor Mikhail” who was to be sent to Denmark in this capacity. The re-



quest of the Danish government to allow the Danish Ambassador's wife, whom he married in Moscow, to leave for Denmark was rejected. In its reply the Department for Foreign Affairs took the liberty of expressing itself in that lofty didactic tone in which Moscow usually addressed smaller states and at the same time of flaunting her cultural superiority, as if Moscow was the bulwark of freedom and the natural rights of man. "For," we read, "it is not the custom in our domains for us to give free men in bondage; and this applies not only to the people of our domains, but also to those of others who reside in our domains; that woman is of our domain, and it would be unseemly to give that woman in bondage to your man Sidor."

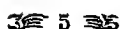
Ivan III displayed great diplomatic skill in his endeavour to establish friendly relations with Turkey. Here there were historical obstacles that gave rise to no few difficulties. Orthodox Moscow regarded herself as the heir to Byzantium, which the Turks had overthrown. To obtain Moscow's assistance against the Turks the western rulers were willing solemnly to recognize the Grand Prince's right to Constantinople. The enraptured Greeks who dreamed of the regeneration of Byzantium and their Moscow disciples propounded the remarkable theory of Moscow becoming a third Rome. It looked as though an insurmountable barrier was rising between Turkey and Moscow. On the other hand, a number of circumstances demanded the establishment of friendly relations between the two states: Moscow needed the theological backing of the Athos monasteries which were subject to Turkey; the Ottoman Empire was drawn to Moscow by commercial interests. When the Turks gained possession of the Crimea and drove the Genoese from there, it became important for them to establish direct intercourse with Moscow. The Grand Prince, in his turn, was interested in obtaining support against the Khan of the Crimea from the latter's suzerain, the Sultan of Turkey.

Hence the bold and original step taken by Ivan III in 1493 in sending an envoy to Constantinople. Vasili III followed in his father's footsteps, and in 1512 an envoy from Moscow was sent to the Turkish Sultan Selim I in Tsargrad bearing a message "of love."

In 1518 the Russian Embassy, with the consent of the Turkish Sultan, took home with them from Athos the celebrated Maxim the Greek. The hopes of the rulers of the West, and of the Pope in particular, of inveigling the Moscow State into a Crusade against the "infidels" were doomed to disappointment.

They were mistaken again when they imagined that the Grand Prince of Moscow could be tempted with the offer of the Crown of the Holy Roman Empire. It was precisely because Moscow encouraged these hopes in the western courts, however, that it was able to establish friendly relations with the uncompromising enemies of Turkey, *viz.*, Rome and Austria. Moscow needed an alliance with the Austrian Hapsburgs as a weapon against Poland; and quite early the Moscow government regarded the Pope as a likely arbitrator in the event of grave complications arising with the Western-Catholic states. Towards the end of Ivan III's reign Pope Alexander Borgia exerted efforts to bring about a reconciliation between the Polish-Lithuanian and Moscow states and at the same time attempted to induce Ivan III to enter into an alliance with other western monarchs with the object of driving the Turks out of Europe. The Moscow Ambassadors—the Greek Dimitri Ralev and Mitrophan Karacharov, were sent to Rome to conduct negotiations. These were not the first Russian diplomats to go to Italy, however. As early as 1474 Tolbuzin was sent there with instructions to hire in Venice artists, handicraftsmen, iron-masters and armourers.

The Russian diplomats in Italy astonished everyone by their punctiliousness as regards etiquette. They stubbornly refused to yield precedence to anyone in court ceremonies, during audiences, or in church. If they failed to receive guarantees that they would have precedence over all others, they preferred to keep away from the audiences; and if on arriving in church they found that ambassadors from other countries had received better places than they, they immediately took their departure. This behaviour of the Russian ambassadors abroad is extremely characteristic. They, of course, acted in conformity with the very precise instructions they received in Moscow, and in this too we have an example of the persistent care Ivan III exercised to uphold the dignity of the Moscow State.



It is impossible to conceive of an intricate foreign policy being conducted without a special staff of experienced men from among whom the government could choose envoys to send abroad and experts to conduct negotiations with foreign embassies. The ancient *druzhinniki*, headed by the boyars, and trained only in the use of arms, were unfitted for this task. It was found necessary to turn to the ecclesiastical school, which trained *dyaks* and *pod'yachie* (secretaries and undersecretaries) who were the equals of the West-European clerks who graduated from the universities and staffed the royal chancelleries.

The elevation of the *dyaks* began in the reign of Ivan III. In the sixteenth century foreigners were astonished at the extent of the clerical work conducted at the Court of Moscow. Particularly striking were the dimensions of the Military Administration, which in Moscow was called the *Razryad* and which foreign observers sometimes referred to as the State Chancellery. In Moscow efforts were made to record the acts of everyday state life in detailed and exact protocols. During his campaigns the sovereign was accompanied by a *razryadni dyak* and his chancellery, which had charge of the service list, the distribution of duties and equipment and the list of rewards, and kept the records of the campaign. There are grounds for believing that the official records of state events were drawn up in the *Razryad*.

Characteristic of the thoroughness with which historical and statistical records were kept in the Moscow Chancellery is a work compiled by the *dyaks* of the *Razryad* on the Grand Prince's instructions, which contained a detailed genealogical table of the Grand Prince's House, together with the pedigrees of the subordinate princes and of the notable boyars in his service. This royal genealogical table, which was probably drawn up in 1555, during Ivan IV's youth, was the fruit of difficult and painstaking archive research pursued for a definite object, *viz.*, to link the origin of the Moscow Grand Prince's line with the history of the Romanic

Caesars, and in this way immeasurably to raise the prestige of the Moscow rulers in foreign and domestic affairs.

These scholarly-bureaucratic documents are redolent of firm self-confidence and sense of dignity. The Court of Moscow, and the Moscow State administration, worked out their own peculiar methods, acquired expressive, independent features, and attached great value to their own official, ceremonial forms.



The independence of the Moscow State found characteristic expression in its religious policy. The Moscow rulers were able to achieve serene balance in the complex problems of religion: to maintain friendship with Turkey and to sustain the hopes of liberation of the Orthodox Greeks who were subject to the latter; not to disappoint the hopes of the Pope in his plans for a Crusade, and to parry all attempts to draw Moscow into a union of the churches. Skill on the part of the government was particularly called for here by the fact that foreign relations in church matters created no few difficulties at home. When the Papal legate who, in 1472, accompanied the Byzantine Princess Royal, Sophia Palaeologue,<sup>27</sup> to Russia, desired to enter Moscow preceded by a Latin Cross, the Metropolitan bluntly declared that he would immediately leave Moscow by another gate. The Grand Prince was obliged to handle his own church with the greatest caution. Neither her wealth, nor her school which trained such excellent officials, nor her moral support could be neglected, for none other than the representatives of the church had propounded the theory of the divine right of authority, and they were always ready to bring it up to date. Up to the fifties of the sixteenth century the clergy were a most important prop of the monarchy.

On the other hand, the church could not be permitted to rise higher than the secular power. At that time the cry for reform was raised throughout Europe and the crisis in the medieval church was maturing. Already in the reign of Ivan III the same questions were acutely raised in Moscow as were about to be settled in the

West by the Reformation, *viz.*, the transfer to the state of church and particularly of monastierial property, the disestablishment of the church, and right of free interpretation of the fundaments of religious dogma. Two parties arose: the Josephians, supporters of the Monk Joseph Volotsky,<sup>28</sup> and the Trans-Volga Elders, or Presbyteries. These parties are strongly reminiscent of the Catholic and Protestant parties in the early period of the schism in the church.

Ivan III was very much inclined towards a Protestant settlement of the church property question on the lines adopted in England and in Sweden. When, at a Church Council held in 1503, a large number of the supporters of monastierial landownership left the assembly, he permitted, or rather, instructed, Nilus Sorsky,<sup>29</sup> the celebrated leader of the "poverty" party, *i.e.*, which demanded adherence to the monastierial vows of poverty, to deliver an impassioned oration against the church accumulating worldly goods. Nevertheless, the government avoided a rupture with the powerful clergy, which constituted a wealthy, efficient and enterprising force. The government realized that while the Trans-Volga party excelled its opponents in literary and oratorical talent, it, nevertheless, lacked political acumen; it could offer only the prospect of denominational chaos, the break-up of the church into numerous denominations, ideological confusion and economic stagnation. Ivan III confined himself to the policy of preventing the Josephian Inquisitors from persecuting the advocates of the "poor church," while keeping the "poverty" party as a counter-balance to the advocates of church privilege. His successors adopted the same line. In the reign of Vasili III, first Varlaam, who was inclined to favour the Trans-Volga party, became the Metropolitan of Moscow, and later the more secularly-minded Daniel, a zealous disciple of Joseph Volotsky, was installed in that post. In the reign of Ivan IV the acute question of monastierial property was raised again, and the abolition of monastierial privileges came up on the order of the day.

Remaining neutral between the parties in church disputes, the Court of Moscow maintained a religious tolerance which is all the more remarkable for the reason that this was the age in which the most fierce religious disputes raged in the West, when whole sec-

tions of the population of a given country were deprived of civil rights for departing from established dogma, when governments were zealously engaged in religious persecution, and when the Inquisition flourished.

It is not surprising that Gennadius, the learned Archbishop of Novgorod, complained about the indulgence shown at the Court of Ivan III to heretics of the so-called Hebrew persuasion and, holding up as an example to the Moscow government the Spanish King (Ferdinand the Catholic, 1479-1516) who had purged his country of false doctrine, called for the persecution of heretics. Nor is it surprising that it was told of Ivan III that, when almost about to yield to the exhortations of the advocates of religious persecution, his conscience was sorely troubled, and late at night he summoned Joseph Volotsky, the leader of the irreconcilables, and asked him: "Is it not a sin to put heretics to death?"

Ivan III bequeathed this spirit of calm restraint in disputes over dogma to his successors. In the reign of Ivan IV the rationalism and mysticism of the representatives of the Greek Orthodox Renaissance led to doctrines which are highly reminiscent of those of the progressive Protestant trends in the West. Such were the heresies of Matvei Bashkin, of the Trans-Volgian Artemius, a disciple of Maxim the Greek, and of Theodosius the Squint-Eyed. Although Bashkin was convicted for heresy by the Council of 1553, the government deemed it sufficient to punish him with banishment. In the case of another heretic, Theodorites, Ivan IV, in 1557, sent him, after a brief confinement in prison, to Constantinople to conduct negotiations with the Patriarch with the view to obtaining from the latter a charter of confirmation of his, Ivan's, status as Tsar.

Comparing Ivan Grozny with Philip II of Spain (b. 1527) and with the contemporary French kings, V. S. Ikonnikov justly observes that, unlike his western confrères, the Moscow Tsar did not place religious offences on a par with political sedition. In this light the words Ivan Grozny wrote in his letter to Maximilian II<sup>90</sup> concerning the St. Bartholomew Massacre of 1572 ring sincere: "You, dear Brother, grieve over the blood that was shed; that in the

Kingdom of the French King several thousands were slain together with suckling babes; it is quite seemly for a Christian sovereign to grieve over the inhuman treatment of so many people by the French King, and over the blood he has spilt without reason." These words are in striking contrast to the hearty congratulations Philip II sent on that occasion to Charles IX, who had connived at the St. Bartholomew Massacre.

### 7

Brilliant in its diplomacy and flexible and skillful in the handling of religious complications, the Moscow government astonishes one no less by its ability to handle masses of soldiers, to discipline that mobile and unruly class which, in the neighbouring Polish-Lithuanian State, frustrated all the efforts of the monarchy, and which, on achieving its golden liberty, reduced the machinery of state to rack and ruin.

There was a time in the Polish-Lithuanian State of the fifteenth century when it seemed as though the monarchy would be able to profit by the strife between the higher military caste, the Pans, and the mass of the middle and lower Szlachta, or nobility. But it so turned out that King Casimir IV.<sup>31</sup> a gifted and resourceful statesman, after subjugating the aristocratic Pans with the aid of the Szlachta, was unable to prevent the subsequent rapprochement between the two classes and the limitation of the powers of the monarch that resulted from it. His skill was nullified by his inability to cope with three nations—the Poles, Lithuanians and Russians—and by his government's lack of a centre of attraction and integration. When calling up levies, or collecting special taxes, the king was obliged to reach agreement with the separate regions. Before forming an army, he was obliged, in every region, to reach agreement with the local Szlachta corporation. At crucial moments, when it was necessary to dispatch the army against a foreign foe, the Szlachta, realizing that they constituted a formidable, independent force, compelled the royal headquarters to grant them further privileges, *i.e.*, fresh rights and exemptions from old obligations.

The concessions the king made to the Pans and Szlachta deprived him of authoritative power and his state of integrity. The latter was reduced to a loose union, within which the landowners, big and small, held almost independent sway. Nobody outside the Szlachta enjoyed full civil rights. The state lacked finances because the government was unable to collect taxes without putting into motion the cumbersome machinery of voting in vogue in the local and central Diets. It could not even muster troops because the Szlachta had ensured for itself exemption from compulsory service. In fact, the government lost all means of carrying through any reforms whatever. In Poland, and in Lithuania, which copied the former in all things, the King and Grand Prince was reduced to a position that could be likened to that of a President of a College of high dignitaries. The sessions of the Grand Diet, composed of Pans—the Rada and the Posolska (Szlachta) Izba\* were but brilliant pageants, at which the aristocracy flaunted their golden freedom. It, like the king, was destitute of governmental power. Its incongruous forms of procedure and its dependence upon the regional Diets precluded all possibility of it arriving at any common decision, and it invariably wrecked every measure of reform that came before it.

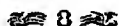
The fatal defects inherent in the Szlachta republic became strikingly revealed in the reign of Sigismund I (1506-1548), a contemporary of Vasili III and of the infant Ivan IV. Although one of the most skilful statesmen of his time, his mind teeming with original designs, adroit and tireless, Sigismund I nevertheless failed utterly in his attempt to restore the state lands to the crown and to introduce compulsory military service for the Szlachta. Like Casimir IV, he tried to introduce reforms simultaneously with the mustering of a general levy, but the ruling classes had been utterly corrupted by the preceding cases of the mustering of general levies which had degenerated into a haggle for liberties. In 1538 an attempt of this kind ended in a scandal; the Szlachta, which had been called up for the war against Walachia, dispersed to their homes

\* Senate and House of the Nobility.



after rejecting the reform proposed by the king. In the same reign the Szlachta perpetuated their status by passing laws which gave them a monopoly of landownership and ensured them of labour power in the shape of the peasants who were placed under their absolute power and jurisdiction.

It is very important to remember these circumstances in order to be able properly to appraise the admiration for Poland expressed by Muscovites of the type of Kurbski. It must also not be forgotten that the Moscow government was obliged to govern a newly-formed class similar to the Polish Szlachta, whose liberties it strongly envied; but while in the neighbouring state the power of the new aristocracy was consolidated, in Moscow the remnants of the former power of the old aristocracy were destroyed. By annexing the appanages the Grand Prince of Moscow cut the ground from under the feet of his subordinate kinsmen, compelled them to take up their residences in Moscow and converted them into provincial governors and regimental commanders of his army. They joined the ranks of the old state servants, merged with them, and mixed with the ordinary courtiers. In the service in Moscow, they mutually weakened each other in the struggle for precedence. Engaged in guarding their ancestral honours, the princely and ancient boyar houses became utterly disunited in face of the supreme power.



Ivan III first introduced the system of distributing lands among the medium and minor officers of the army after Novgorod was incorporated in the Moscow State in 1478. By this means a result was achieved of extremely important political consequences. These landowners from around Moscow were planted on the dismembered patrimonies of the vanquished Novgorod boyars. In this way the power of the aristocracy was completely undermined and the separatist tendencies of the regions in which they had ruled were checked.

The new squires became most reliable props of the central Moscow authority. At the same time, the elevation of this class was a first step in the direction of building up a new military system and



TSAR IVAN GROZNY  
*Portrait XVI-XVII cent Copenhagen Museum*



prepared the ground for the growth of a new type of economy. It served as the basis for the development of a manorial system<sup>32</sup> unique in European history. True, the rudiments of this system were known in Western and Central Europe, but there it flashed past like a brilliant meteor, as for example, in the Anglo-Norman State of William the Conqueror, and also the later example of the artificial inculcation of feudalism in Sweden in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries when, notwithstanding the convulsive attempts to reduce the estates already granted, the efforts of the monarchy were thwarted by the reactionary resistance of the aristocracy.

In the Moscow State this form developed into a broad, harmonious, centralized system which lasted for nearly three hundred years. It left in the government's hands a vast land fund, permitted it to establish also fiscal unity and to regulate all grants and rewards for services out of a central Treasury. It enabled the government to send soldier squires to any front no matter how distant, while at the same time keeping them under strict discipline and under its constant administrative and economic control. Looking back now it seems to us that the most important feature of this system was the ownership of land on the condition of rendering constant service. This prevented the land from being converted into private property, or a privilege. It was only in the latter half of the eighteenth century that the depraved autocracy, resting on its laurels, allowed this weapon of state discipline to slip from its hands. The Moscow monarchy of the sixteenth century wielded it to perfection.

The manorial system and the complete subordination to the Moscow sovereign of a numerous aristocratic cavalry force were introduced at the very time when the military system in the Polish-Lithuanian State was tottering. It is interesting to trace the outlines of institutions similar to the Polish-Lithuanian in Moscow and to note how they were filled with an entirely different content. In Poland and Lithuania the *Szlachta* of every region constituted an independent corporation, having its own parliamentary assembly, a *Sejmik*, or small Diet, which sent its representatives, bound by the decisions of the local corporations, to the Central Diet. In the Moscow State it was also the practice to call *uyezd* (district) as-

semblies of servants of the state, but instead of representing the autonomous interests of local aristocratic corporations they became executive organs of the central authority, bearing collective responsibility in distributing duties.

In the reign of Ivan III the outlines of the two types of assemblies of which the Polish-Lithuanian Diet was constituted were clearly visible. In 1471, in connection with the conflict with the Novgorod republic,<sup>33</sup> the Grand Prince assembled "all the bishops of his lands and all his princes and boyars, all his voyevodas and warriors." This assembly of all the warriors, "after no little reflection," resolved jointly with the sovereign to march against Novgorod. During Ivan III's negotiations with Lithuania messages were received in Moscow "from all the Princes and Pans of the Rada [Gentlemen of the Council] to our brothers and rulers, the Princes and Pans of the Rada of the Grand Prince Ivan Vasilyevich." The Grand Prince accepted this title as an honour and commanded that his boyars be given the pompous title of Voyevoda, after the manner of the Lithuanians.

The first case we mentioned was something in the nature of the camp assemblies of the armed Szlachta which Casimir IV called before starting on his campaign against the Teutonic Knights and which served as the starting point for uniting the representatives of the Szlachta in the Posolska Izba, in other words, the Lower Chamber of the Diet. In the second case the Lithuanian Pans of the Rada, or the Upper Chamber of the Diet, voluntarily recognized the boyar counsellors of the Grand Prince of Moscow as their brothers, i.e., as a body similar to their own. Nevertheless, the Zemski Sobor,<sup>34</sup> or National Assembly, the predecessor of which was the assembly of bishops, princes, boyars and all the warriors in 1471, and the Boyars' Duma (Council)<sup>35</sup> which developed into the sovereign's permanent council for the discussion of the most important political affairs, imposed no restrictions upon the supreme authority. The Zemski Sobor was assembled on the initiative and at the discretion of the government, discussed questions that were submitted to it, and consisted of groups and individuals especially chosen by the central authority. It represented, as it were, a

grand review of the military and bureaucratic forces at the government's disposal and a means of probing the temper prevailing among them. The Zemski Sobor in Moscow was not the rudiment of a parliamentary assembly which might have imposed restrictions upon the monarchy; on the contrary, it was an instrument for strengthening the monarchy.

The government consistently and perseveringly endeavoured to clothe the services the squires rendered the state in the form of government service and to wean them of all idea of obtaining privileges. It was the squires' duty always to be ready to go on the march "to fight to the death against the Nogais, or Germans, without stinting their lives." With every annexation of new territory some of the squires resident near Moscow were transferred to that new territory, the local landowners being transferred to the midland or to other border districts. The government prevented the exclusive caste spirit from permeating the ranks of the squires; it constantly infused into the service class representatives of non-Russian nationalities, and also of "priests and the common people," as Kurbski expressed it. It intermixed people of low calling with those of ancient, honoured and celebrated names.

Of great importance was the fact that in addition to grants of land, men in military service were given salaries in money, particularly during big campaigns. None of the European states of that time could have stood such heavy budgetary expenditures. We shall mention only one fact, which cannot fail to astonish the reader. In the diplomatic correspondence between Vasili III and the King of Denmark we read that Moscow paid the Danes "penyazi" (money); and for what purpose? So that with the aid of this subsidy the Grand Master of the Prussian Order might hire soldiers for the war against Poland, the common enemy of Denmark and Moscow.

The wealth of Moscow positively dazzled foreigners. English travellers of that period, mainly those whose greed for gold knew no bounds, described Moscow as a fabulous Peru. At a royal banquet (in 1557) "all the tables aforesaid were served in vessels of pure and fine gold, as well as basins, and ewers, platters, dishes and saucers, as also of great pots with an innumerable sort of small

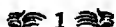
drinking pots of diverse fashions, whereof a great number were set with precious stones." On another occasion, during that same winter, in the presence of the Tzar "there dined five hundred foreigners and two hundred Russians, and all had placed before them golden dishes, so many that they touched each other. Moreover, there were four sideboards filled with gold and silver vessels; among other objects, twelve silver kegs, each with six golden hoops." The amazing brilliance of the royal treasures is mentioned by Jenkinson, the celebrated English traveller, who travelled to Central Asia. In describing a royal banquet, he mentioned a golden vessel, about four and a half feet long, the cover of which was surmounted with turrets and dragons' heads.





## A WINDOW INTO EUROPE

All Ivan III's greatness and skill as the organizer of the Moscow State stood out with exceptional prominence after his death, when during the reign of his successor and the infancy of his grandson, the government school which he had founded functioned of its own accord, as it were, without recognized leaders and guides, by virtue of the reason he had infused into it.



IN THE REIGN of Vasili III Moscow became more than ever the object of attention of the western states. The German Emperor and the Pope of Rome did their utmost to tempt the Grand Prince of Moscow with the offer of a kingly crown. The former hoped to persuade the Russians to undertake a Crusade against the Turks and at the same time had designs for partitioning the Polish-Lithuanian-Hungarian State between Austria and Moscow. The latter dreamed of including Moscow in a Church Union under the suzerainty of



Rome. Into these plans for uniting the churches the Pope skilfully drew Moscow's new allies acquired by Ivan III, *viz.*, Denmark and the Knights of the Prussian Order. The King of Denmark favoured this idea very strongly and in 1512 he tried to persuade Vasili III to send his representative to the Lateran Council, which the Pope had convened in Rome for the purpose of strengthening the authority of the Papal Throne.

The West sent to Moscow men of the most diverse talents. One of these was the Genoese Centurione, a phantast in politics and geography, who dreamed of reviving commercial intercourse between his native city and the Far East *via* the Caspian, Muscovy, the Baltic and Denmark. Another was Herberstein, a humanist scholar, who succeeded in unearthing the most interesting historical and ecclesiastical monuments of the mysterious Eastern Kingdom and in familiarizing himself with the annals, legal codes and even the religious literature of Moscow society.

All were nonplussed by the firmly worked out and skilfully arranged traditions of Moscow diplomacy. The Grand Prince gratefully accepted the Pope's mediation in concluding a truce with Lithuania, and never forgot his eternal request for expert iron-masters, armourers, physicians, architects, engineers and artists. On the question that interested the Western European governments most, however, the question of a rapprochement of the churches, he invariably made the dry and cold reply: "The Court of Moscow will remain faithful to the Orthodox Church and has no wish to enter into any negotiations on this question." To the Prussian Ambassador Schomberg, the Moscow government, in 1517, observed with biting irony that he was wasting his time pleading another's cause; for by insisting on a union of the churches he ran the risk of damaging the interests of his own Order; if the Pope learnt that the Moscow Tsar was inclined to reach an agreement with the Catholics, he would press him to make peace with Poland, Prussia's enemy.

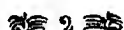
The period of Ivan IV's minority was a critical one for the Moscow State, which in Herberstein's opinion had no equal in the world. The fact that the monarchy in Moscow escaped shipwreck and suffered no damage from the "notables" as it did in Poland,

was to a large extent due to its mighty ally, the church. The hierarchy plunged into the political struggle with exceptional ardour. The Princes Shuiski,<sup>36</sup> evidently scheming to displace the reigning House of Kalita, met with the stern resistance of the clergy. Within the brief space of three years they succeeded in deposing two successive Metropolitans - Daniel and Joasaph,<sup>37</sup> but, in the end, the clergy triumphed. In 1542 the celebrated Macarius,<sup>38</sup> a product of Ivan III's school (born 1482) became Metropolitan. Under his influence Ivan IV, in 1547, was proclaimed to be of age, but was left under the guardianship of the Priest Sylvester.<sup>39</sup> Thus, the future Ivan Grozny, who had not yet unfolded his brilliant talents, was kept in the background for another six years (1547-1553).

The decade from 1512 to 1553 may with some grounds be described as the period of clerical policy. All reforms, and all questions affecting practical life, received their direction from the supreme ecclesiastical authority, while the church itself experienced great unrest and grappled with the most complex problems concerning its structure and doctrine. Macarius, a scholar, mild, moderate, but very conservative, convened one Council after another with the object of removing local distinctions and of uniting and consolidating the State Church in the same way as the state had been united. At the Councils held in 1547 and 1549 the Russian saints were united in a single, national book of *saints*. In 1551, at the time when, under Macarius' guidance, preparations were being made for compiling the huge theological-cosmological encyclopedia known as *Chetyi-Minci* (Theologico-Menology), the Stoglavi Sobor (Hundred Chapter Council)<sup>40</sup> was held. In many respects this Council was similar to the Council of Trent, the second session of which was held in that very same year. To strengthen the tottering edifice of the church by strict discipline among the clergy and by establishing a rigid ritual, to influence the lives of the laity by improving the morals of the clergy, and to extend the educational influence of the church to the whole of society, such were the objects of the circle which grouped itself around Macarius, and whose objects were similar to those of the Western-Catholic Reformation. In Moscow these at first sight purely ecclesiastical, moral, and social reforms,

pursued also objects of practical politics. They served to strengthen centralism, the authority of the Moscow monarchy.

Beside them were church reformers of a more radical type who stood on the border of heresy, as for example, Artemius, a disciple of Maxim the Greek. In 1551 he was still the government's candidate for the post of Prior of the Troitsa Monastery, but two years later he was indicted on the charge of too freely criticizing the Scriptures. He proved to be closely familiar with the heretic rationalists who, in their turn, in the persons of Bashkin and Theodosius, the Squint-Eyed, represented two shades—a moderate and extreme—one corresponding to Protestantism, and the other to Unitarianism (repudiation of the Trinity).



The passion and controversy that flared up in the church clearly reflected the richness of intellectual life and the abundance of talent among the intelligentsia who surrounded Ivan IV in the early years of his reign. At the same time they lent to all branches of the administration the peculiar impress of religious solemnity and ecclesiastical scholarship. Thus, the struggle against the Crimean and Kazan hordes who, after their temporary strife during the reign of Ivan III, joined forces again and hovered menacingly over Moscow, was proclaimed a Crusade against the infidels, lying as a great duty upon the conscience of the young Tsar. Sylvester was fond of resorting to theatrical effects in order to influence the Tsar. Such was his appearance before the seventeen-year-old Tsar on the Sparrow Hills in 1547, during the great fire of Moscow, and his effort, by passionate denunciation, to rouse fear and repentance in the heart of the young monarch. A similarly dramatic scene was arranged during the Stoglavi Sobor, which was accompanied by pompous ceremonies, and the public appearance of the Tsar, who made a speech addressed to the various estates, and to the whole people.

In the opinion of I. E. Zabelin, it was none other than Sylvester who inspired the historical mural paintings executed in 1547-1552 on the chamber walls in the Moscow Palace. In these paintings we

have an entire theory of government in pictures. The Tsar, youthful in appearance, is extolled as a righteous judge and fearless warrior. He distributes alms to the poor. From his hands flows water which sanctifies the people. He vanquishes impious foes. The inspirer of this picture-book for moulding the mind and heart of the Tsar is depicted in the guise of a wise hermit, who acts as the young ruler's mentor.

It was during the administration of the clergy that a number of charters were issued granting the people the right to elect local juridical and Treasury administrators.

Many of these charters are conspicuous for their democratic phraseology and for their direct appeal to wide sections of society. For example, in the Belozerskaya Charter, "the Grand Prince Ivan Vasilyevich of All the Russias," after enumerating in detail all ranks from "princes and the sons of boyars" to peasants, "kennel-men, huntsmen, fishermen, beaver hunters and quilt-renters," seems to gather them all into one whole and again repeats with special emphasis: "*to all, without exception whatsoever.*" The terms in which this charter is couched are also characteristic. To meet the interests and needs of the inhabitants of various localities who had complained of the tyranny of the judges and inspectors sent from the centre, the government proposes to the two largest classes in society—the sons of the boyars and the peasants—to "*take counsel together, all for each*" and to elect chiefs. (My italics.—R.W.) It regarded a general assembly of this kind quite in the order of things, and had no doubt that it was capable of achieving coordinated action.

It is very probable that it was during the period of Sylvester's administration, although it may have been earlier, that the reform bearing the title "To the Benevolent Tsar. A Plan for Administration and Land Surveying" was drafted and submitted to the Tsar. This reform was drafted by Yermolai who, on taking monastic vows, assumed the name of Erasmus. In this plan the author urges the Tsar to pay equal attention "to all those living under him, and not only to the high dignitaries, if he concerns himself with government." He goes on to say still more emphatically: "The high dig-

nitaries are needed, but it is not by their labours that they live. First of all are needed peasants. From their labour comes forth bread, and they are the source of all wealth." Hard is the lot of the husbandmen who know no rest, who groan under the burden of taxation, providing post horses and other services and "constantly bear diverse burdens." The peasants must be relieved of money taxation, and the Treasury must rest content with the revenues obtained from state land. Let the peasants sustain by their labours those in government service, the boyars, the voyevodas, and the warriors, but they must be granted larger plots of land. In particular, the peasants must be relieved of the payment of all monetary dues because "the peasants are tormented for the sake of silver, which is taken by the Tsar's authorities and distributed among the high dignitaries and warriors for their enrichment and not to cover their needs."

The author of this plan had very definite opinions about the arrangement of the lives of those in military and civil service. He, as it were, mentally projected and brought out more sharply the way of life of the squires then in vogue. He limited the work of the peasants to that of supplying the squires with means of subsistence. The squires, in their turn, being deprived of the right to collect "silver" from the peasants, were to be prohibited from interfering in the economic life of the countryside and were to undertake to live in the towns in order to perform their duties better. In the plan they are regarded solely as government officials and not as owners of lucrative plots of land, and not even as overseers over the peasants.

There can be no doubt that the author of this plan had had a good literary and legal schooling, and had worked on Byzantine sources. He revealed who his teachers were primarily by his proposal for a new method of measuring land in the form of large square plots, reminiscent of the celebrated "stadia" of the ancient Roman land surveyors which were inherited by Byzantium. He also showed that he was familiar with the most democratic laws of the Byzantine Emperors who more than once protected their peasant soldiers from the encroachments of the big landowners and assumed the role of guardians of the "poor and the toilers." The author of

this reform also urged the Tsar to protect "the working people." His concern for the lot of the peasants is not unique however. At the Hundred Chapter Council, one of the higher hierarchs, the ex-Metropolitan Joasaph, raised his voice in behalf of the peasants and proposed that they should be relieved of the heavy "ransom money" which was collected from them for the purpose of ransoming the prisoners of war in the Crimea, and to transfer the tax to the rich bishops and monasteries.

Both the democratic terms of the Belozersk and other municipal charters and the reform proposed by Yermolai-Erasmus for the benefit of the peasants are enigmas which Russian historians have failed to explain to this day. I will confine myself to only one observation on this point. If the peculiar ideology running through the scheme proposed to the "benevolent Tsar" can be attributed to the influence of the Trans-Volga Elders who opposed the covetousness of the "notables," by whom they meant the big hierarchs and the rich monasteries, the democratic terms in which the charters are couched must be attributed to the skilful demagoguery of these very notables in surplices who at that time had reached the zenith of their prosperity by squeezing the peasants to the utmost. The policy pursued by Ivan Grozny later, when he had freed himself from the tutelage of the party of Sylvester, Adashev and Kurbski, precluded the transfer of the peasants to the old patriarchal form of bondage. The Tsar adopted quite different methods of fiscal administration. A system was introduced which imposed the greatest strain upon the resources of the population, a system that was guided by the imperative principle: "Everything for war."

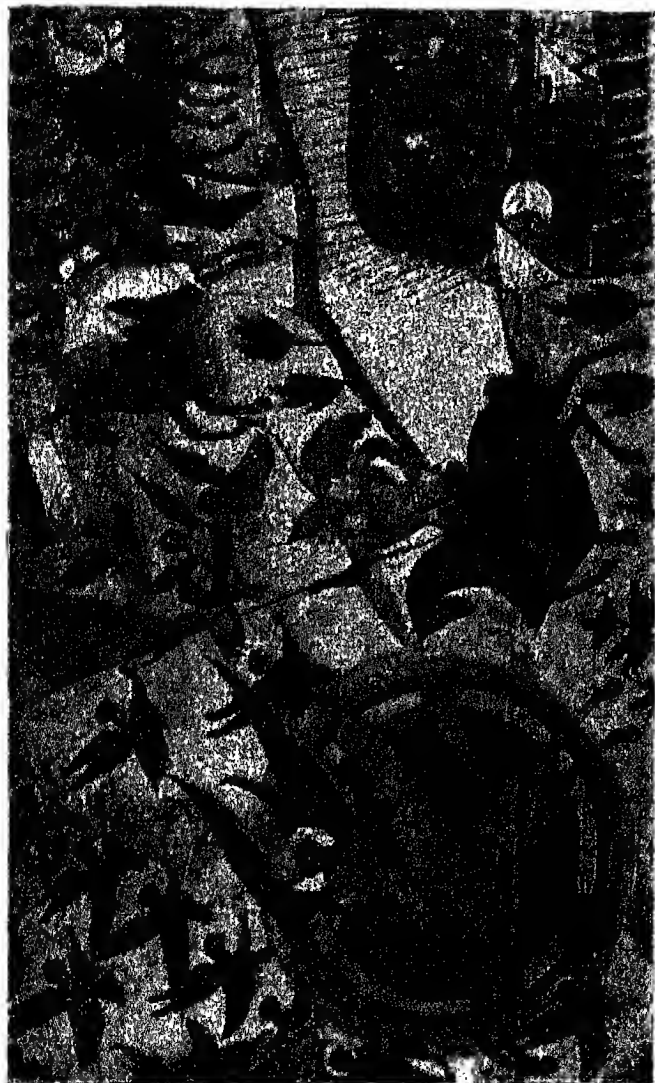
### 3

The ground for Ivan IV's first big victory—the capture of Kazan—was prepared by the persevering and skilful policy pursued by the government of the period of his tutelage. The campaign of 1552 was preceded by the erection of the Fortress of Sviyazhsk, as an outpost and a direct menace to Kazan. Concerning the peculiar technique of Moscow military engineering, the following was related

to Heinrich Staden, a German who served in the Oprichnina: "The Grand Prince commanded that a city be erected with wooden walls, towers and gates, like a real city, and that the beams and timbers be numbered, all of them, from top to bottom. Then the city was dismantled and the timber was placed on rafts and floated down the Volga, together with the soldiers and the heavy artillery. When he arrived near Kazan he commanded that this city be erected and all [the fortifications] be filled with earth. He returned to Moscow, but the city was occupied by Russian men and artillery, and he called it Sviyazhsk." If Kuibski is to be believed, the Tsar had a hundred and fifty large pieces of cannon at his command. The fortress walls of Kazan fell thanks to the skill of the technicians who served him. But what is most important is that from the end of the 'forties the government was engaged in reinforcing its military cadres and in energetically developing the military-manorial system, the foundations of which had been laid by Ivan III.

With subtle tactfulness, without pandering to the aristocracy, the government chose the men for the Tsar's Life Guard Regiment and surrounded his person with a group of men who were most devoted to him. In 1550, after a grand review, a thousand "landowners, sons of boyars, the best servants," provincial soldiers of princely, boyar, as well as of common aristocratic descent, were organized as a special force. In drawing up the list of this force the Moscow government historiographers and statisticians displayed their talents to the utmost. They took into consideration former services and the deeds of the fathers of the candidates. Among the "thousand" were sons of tried voyevodas, the sons of captives of the ill-starred Battle of Orsha of 1514,<sup>41</sup> and we even meet with names from the Synodic of the Uspenski Cathedral,<sup>42</sup> in which, by command of the Tsar, were inscribed for eternal prayer the names of "the brave, and those who died in piety for the Holy Church and for Orthodox Christianity."

In the course of the campaign the members of the "thousand" constituted the Staff and the Guards. They had to be ready at any moment to carry out various commissions. To have this picked force always at hand and to be able to reward them in the best way the



IVAN GROZNY  
*Part of the icon "The Church Militant" Middle of the XVI century*





Tsar granted all those who possessed no estates near Moscow manors in the environs of the capital. The supreme authority did not forget its promises. In subsequent years we find in the lists of voyevodas, Lieutenant-Governors and ambassadors the very names that in 1550 were entered in the Book of the Thousand.

In the reign of Ivan IV the process, begun by Ivan III, of converting all landowners, owners of patrimonies as well as of manors, into a mobile military force, the members of which served for life, was completed. The monarchy set out to take control of all the land occupied by the military and to convert it into state fields. With this object in view Ivan IV commanded the Hundred Chapter Council of 1551 to take an inventory of the dimensions of patrimonial and manorial estates, to register the amount of land each landowner possessed and then to redistribute the land in such a way that each received according to his merits. The Council was also commanded to open a Book of Patrimonies in which were to be entered all changes in the ownership of patrimonies, and also a list of such estates, with an account of the area of arable land, forest, pasture, and so forth. The Tsar expressed his intention to limit pasture land on the estates in definite proportions, so that the farming of the land should produce sufficient to pay the incumbent for his services. The usufruct of the land was to go to the latter, but he could not dispose of the land at his own will. If he allowed the estate which he had been granted to go to rack and ruin he would fall under the Tsar's displeasure. Lastly, the Tsar announced to the Council that he had resolved to send out scribes to take an inventory and measure the dimensions of the state.

These solemn and authoritative declarations carry the historian back to the remote days of antiquity, to the times of the Great Roman Caesars who owned vast territories, who settled tens of thousands of veterans on strictly measured plots of land, and who commissioned their learned surveyors to draw up a detailed inventory of immovable property, implements and valuables. The thoroughness with which the land was distributed by the Moscow State, the precise methodicalness with which state affairs were conducted, and the strict discipline maintained in matters of state service are illustrated

by a particular item among the subjects the Tsar submitted to the Hundred Chapter Council. This was a scheme to provide for the widows of boyars. In this provision was made for all contingencies: what to do in case the widow of a warrior who had been killed in battle was young and could marry again; what to do if a widow's sons grew up, what allowances they were to receive, and the duties of the second husband and stepfather of the children of the first marriage. The supreme authority saw to it that the land should not be separated from service; but at the same time it ensured a livelihood for the military men in its service and provided for the maintenance of their families.

These arrangements for the landowners who were obliged to serve the state in return for the lands they received astonished foreigners and were commented on with naive rapture by Chancellor, the first Englishman to describe Moscow customs. "But if any man had done very good service he [the Duke] gives him a farm or a piece of land; for which he is bound at all times to be ready with so many men as the Duke appoint; who considers in his mind what that land or farm is well able to find; and so many shall he be bound to furnish at all and every such time as wars are held in any of the Duke's dominions." He goes on to relate that if a landowner died without male issue, the estate reverted to the state. If it was reported that the landowner was disabled and was not fit for service, and if the investigation showed that the report was correct, he was deprived of his estate, except for a small part of it for the maintenance of himself and his wife. "And he may not once repine thereat," says Chancellor, "but for answer he will say that he hath nothing, but it is God's and the Duke's graces, and cannot say as we the common people in England say if we have anything: that it is God's and our own. Men may say that these men are in wonderful great awe and obedience, that thus one must give and grant his goods which he hath been scraping and scratching for all his life to be at his Grace's pleasure and command."

Carried away by his subject Chancellor, evidently a monarchist in his convictions, makes the following frank confession concerning his own countrymen: "Oh, that our sturdy rebels were held in the



**'THE CHURCH MILITANT'**

*Icon of the middle of the XVI century. Tretyakovsky State Picture Gallery, Moscow*



like subjection to know their duty towards their Princes. They may not say as some snudges in England say: I would find the Queen a man to serve in my place, or make his friends tarry at home if money have the upper hand. No, no, it is not so in this country; for he shall make humble suit to serve the Duke. And whom he sends most to the wars he thinks he is most in his favour."

After this description Chancellor draws the following general conclusion: "If they [the Russians] knew their strength, no man were able to make match with them, nor they that dwell near them should have rest of them."

#### 4

To the Moslem world the conquest of Kazan and the subsequent subjugation of the Volga region seemed like a piece of powerful magic. It looked as though there were no obstacle that Moscow could not overcome, and that there was no end to her advance. After capturing Astrakhan in 1556 the Moscow voyevodas quickly reached the Caucasus and erected a fortress on the Teiek. From the fact that in 1567, the English on the petition of Jenkinson, the explorer of Central Asiatic routes, were granted the right to trade duty-free in Kazan, Astrakhan, Narva, Dorpat, Bulgaria and in Shemakha, one may assume that at one time the power of the Moscow government extended to part of Transcaucasia.

Evidently Moscow was planning to complete the conquest of the Crimea. One expedition started out from Lithuanian territory and attacked the Crimean Tatars after crossing the Dnieper in 1557, while another tried to force its way across the Isthmus of Perekop. Collecting the impressions of these years, so sinister for the steppe world, Maltsev, the Moscow Ambassador among the Nogais, reported that near Astrakhan "everybody is in fear and trembling of the sovereign Tsar, the only terror of the infidels and Latins under the sun."

It goes without saying that in Moscow the subjugation of Kazan was regarded as an event of the greatest importance. C. Waliszewski, a French historian of the end of the nineteenth century, sneered at the "Oriental flattery" that was indulged in by the Metropolitan

who, on Ivan IV's triumphant return in 1552, likened the Tsar to Alexander Nevski, Dmitri Donskoi, St. Vladimir and Constantine the Great. But this comparison does not seem strange to us. That cleric merely emphasized in his own way the importance of the fall of a formidable bulwark of one of the largest of the Tatar hordes, thanks to which the Moscow Tsar freed himself from an immediate and pressing enemy and for the first time established the predominance of European culture and statehood in the eastern plains.

Incidentally, it is interesting to note that Moscow diplomacy used the subjugation of Kazan and Astrakhan as further grounds for pressing the claim for recognition by the Western Powers of the Tsar's royal title. After Ivan III's marriage with the Greek Princess in 1472, Moscow began very energetically to propound the theory that the Tsar had inherited his royal title from Byzantium. In 1553, however, during the negotiations with Lithuania it was decided to abandon this theory and to urge instead first, the claim to the royal title of St. Vladimir, who on the icons was depicted as a Tsar, then to refer to the title and rights of Monomachus, and lastly to insist that by capturing the Kingdom of Kazan, Ivan IV had *elevated himself to the rank of Tsar*.

Without waiting for the end of campaigns in the South, Ivan IV, in 1558, launched another war for the possession of Livonia, a war which became his life's object, the source of his profound obsessions and, finally, of the tragedy of his reign. At the same time his policy strongly diverged from that of most of his old counsellors, *i.e.*, those who had established a tutelage over him during the period of regency. The time came when Ivan Grozny began independently to pursue his own, intricate and far-reaching policy, in which the diplomat and strategist put excessive and ruthless demands to the country.

### 35 5 35

To what extent was the Livonian War the logical result of Ivan IV's independent designs and will? In his celebrated first letter to Kurbski, written in 1564, Ivan Grozny reverts several times to the subject of the supporters and opponents of the great war. It is

evident that this western war was an issue around which raged the greatest controversy between Sylvester, the majority of the "Elected Rada," and the young Tsar who was thirsting for battle. What was this controversy?

It cannot be said that the idea of closer rapprochement with the West was alien to the policy of the clergy among whom Ivan IV grew up. It was the government of the period of Ivan's adolescence which had commissioned the Hanoverian Schlitter to recruit in Germany and bring to Moscow a whole corps of technicians, physicians, iron-masters and military experts. Nor were Ivan III's plans for annexing Livonia to the Moscow State forgotten. As late as 1551 the Livonian representative in Germany submitted a petition to the Emperor Charles V in which he prayed that his country be saved from "the great and terrible power of the Muscovite who was thirsting to seize Livonia and achieve the mastery of the Baltic Sea, as a result of which he will subjugate all the surrounding countries: Lithuania, Poland and Sweden." It is interesting to note that Protestant Livonia was willing to unite with the Catholic Emperor against the common religious danger that threatened from the East. The Livonian feared that in the guise of craftsmen and military and technical experts, the most desperate sectarians and heretics, such as the Anabaptists, and the like, would "stream to Moscow and thus enable the Moscow Tsar to lay waste to Christendom and fill it with bloody tragedies." He did not realize that in saying this he was paying an unsolicited tribute to the greater religious tolerance that prevailed in the Moscow State compared with the western countries.

Preparations, both diplomatic and strategical, for the war for the possession of Livonia were commenced long before 1558. Perturbed by the threatening attitude adopted by Moscow, the Livonians sent embassy after embassy with proposals to conclude perpetual peace; but the Court of Moscow would agree only to brief periods of truce. In 1550 the first truce was concluded for a period of five years. In 1554 another embassy appeared in Moscow and pleaded for a treaty of peace of fifty years' duration; but Okolnichii, or second-class courtier, Adashev, and the Dyak Mikhailov, demanded the tribute that was due to Moscow from Livonia and the payment



of arrears. They showed the Livonian ambassadors the treaty that had been concluded between Moscow and Grand Master Plettenberg at the beginning of the sixteenth century and interpreted it in the sense that it made Livonia a vassal of Moscow. Adashev read them a short lecture on history in the course of which he said: "It is amazing that you do not wish to know that your ancestors came to Livonia from across the sea and invaded the domains of the Grand Princes of Russia, as a consequence of which much blood was shed. Not wishing to see the shedding of Christian blood, our royal ancestors permitted the Germans to reside in the lands you occupied, but on the condition that they paid the Grand Princes. They failed to keep their promise; they did not pay the tribute. So now you must pay all the arrears."

On the way to the royal capital the Livonian ambassadors saw signs of feverish preparations for war. At every four or five miles along their route they saw newly-built post stations with huge stables attached. What astonished them more were the long trains of sledges, loaded with gunpowder and lead, moving toward the western frontier.

In 1555 the Moscow government went to war with the Swedes with the object of hewing a road to Livonia along the Gulf of Finland; but it was obviously preparing for a bigger campaign. At that time Sylvester, Adashev and Kurbski still occupied their old posts in the supreme governmental council. The question arises whether serious disagreement already existed between Ivan IV and his counsellors at that time. The Tsar himself complained that he had been restrained from military intervention too long, and that this had caused a great deal of unnecessary sacrifice. Did he wish to imply that had Moscow acted earlier it would have been possible to prevent the division of the lands of the Knightly Orders between Poland and Sweden and to have taken by surprise the important coastal towns of Riga and Reval, which were the key to the possession of Livonia?

But why did the Sylvester, Adashev and Kurbski party procrastinate if their ultimate aim too was to annex Livonia? Ivan Grozny wrote that his opponents had accused him of having de-

vastated Livonia. It seems as though he was trying to justify his waging war against Christian states, the Livonian Order and Lithuania. Does not this indicate that the clergy had not abandoned the idea of a union with Western Christendom; that the policy of unification pursued by the Papal Throne had attractions for them too, and that they hoped to achieve success in their diplomatic campaign against Livonia, whereas considerations of this kind were alien to the more secular mind of Ivan IV?

Be that as it may, the Tsar's temperament, his impetuosity and self-confidence were noted and taken into account in the West. In the petition of the Livonian Ambassador of 1551 already referred to, we read: "The present ruling Muscovite is a young man and therefore exceptionally inclined to war and bloodshed." But in 1551 Ivan IV, then twenty years of age, did not dare break away from the tutelage he was under. Seven years later he felt quite free, and without hesitation he launched his undertaking, which was so enormous in its magnitude and consequences. He had on his side only one of the members of the governing group, the Dyak Viskovati, the director of foreign policy who, in 1549, was at the head of the Posolski Prikaz, or Department for Foreign Affairs.

How is one to explain the profound chief motives that led to the Livonian War, this great forward spurt by Moscow in the sixteenth century? And how is one to define the role Ivan Grozny played in the opening of the Baltic campaign and in the undeviating pursuit of this most difficult war of that period? These questions may be briefly answered as follows: The Livonian War, which began in 1558, was the third big conflict in the centuries-old struggle of the Russian people against the German aggressors. In 1242 the Germans attacked; in 1501-1502 they were compelled to defend themselves, and in 1558 they sustained defeat. The Livonian War was a just war, not a war of aggression. Moscow fought for the restitution of ancient Russian lands, lands of the "fathers" and "grandfathers"; it fought to unite all the Russias.

In the first half of the sixteenth century there was a mighty growth of productive forces in the Moscow State, strikingly reflected in the flourishing condition of old cities and the rise of numerous

new ones. In the towns *home markets* were opened, in which the main article of commerce was grain; and this in its turn, reflected the enormous progress achieved in agriculture. In the middle of the century industry began to develop on such a large scale, and at such a rate, that the problem of opening *foreign markets*, of obtaining routes for exporting the products of the national industry arose and imperatively demanded solution. For Moscow this meant, primarily, participation in the international grain trade, which, as we have shown above, was of such vital importance for the industrial countries of Western Europe. Ivan Grozny's extraordinary powers of penetration and his brilliant intuition were revealed by his realization that this new situation was inevitable, dictated by the vital requirements of the rapidly growing economy of the Moscow State. He realized that it was essential to open a window into Europe not only for the purpose of *importing* manufactured goods, and not only for gaining access to the higher technique of the West, but also for the purpose of *exporting* the principal agricultural produce of the Moscow State.



In launching a difficult and intricate struggle for an outlet to the Baltic Sea Ivan IV revived the plans of his celebrated grandfather. It is not surprising that in a letter to Kurbski he referred to the designs of his grandfather repeatedly and mentioned his father only once, in passing. First of all he wanted to eliminate the Hanseatic merchants as the middlemen in European commerce and establish direct trade with the European countries. With this object in view his thoughts were turned mainly towards the Baltic ports, such as Narva, Reval, Hapsal and Riga. But Moscow did not lose sight of other advantages of conquest, namely the revenues of the rich and well-populated region and the possibility of obtaining artisans and agricultural labourers there. Even Ivan III, during his war against the Knights of the Livonian Order, laid great stress on the importance of capturing live booty, and sent captive Livonians into the interior of Muscovy.

Moscow was very familiar with Livonia and knew all her specific features and weaknesses. In that period the Great Russians felt nearer to that country than they did in the subsequent period. Most of the Livonian towns bore Russian names, which had originated from ancient local names. Reval was called Kolyvan. Narva was called Rugodiv. Veuden was called Kess and Marienburg—Alist. Others had translated names. Neuschloss was called Syrensk; Kurbski translated Weissenstein as Belyi Kamen (White Stone). Neuhaus became Novgorodok (New Township). Many names were Russianized. Thus Tolsburg became Tolshchebor; Sesswegen became Chistvin; Rozitten became Rezhitsa, and Ludzen became Luzhi.

On every occasion the outcome of the armed collisions between the Russians and the Germans was determined by the social, political and military-technical conditions under which the belligerent nations lived; but a very important role was also played by the personalities of chief military and political leaders.

In 1242, in the famous Battle on the Ice (on Lake Peipus) two armies came into collision which were approximately equal to each other in armament and vigour. The Knightly Orders were then at the zenith of their aggressive organization, and they had been emboldened by their continuous victories and rich booty. On the other hand, the Novgorod warriors, defending their native soil, and having only lately hurled back the invading Swedish Crusaders, fought with extraordinary courage and determination. The issue was decided by the heroism of the Russian people and by the personality of their brilliant leader, Alexander Nevski.

Two hundred and sixty years later, in the war undertaken by Ivan III to obtain access to the Baltic, the relation of forces between the Livonian Germans and the Great Russians grouped around Moscow was different. The organization of the Knightly Orders had deteriorated. The Livonian Knights had abandoned monastic for secular habits of life. They had acquired private property and had been converted into a landowning nobility. Absorbed with the business of their estates and striving to obtain the highest profit in the foreign and home markets, which continued to grow and expand, the barons and knights definitely tried to avoid military

service. In the fifteenth century the nobility had become totally unaccustomed to the art of war. The Livonians rendered no assistance whatever to their kindred Knights of the Teutonic Order who, during the crises in 1410 and 1161, suffered severe defeat at the hands of the united Lithuanian-Russian and Polish forces.

In 1502 the Livonian Knights themselves, who by now were soldiers only in name, came under the blows of the Moscow State, which had concentrated its military forces more thoroughly than the Jagiello had succeeded in doing during the union of Lithuania and Poland. Political collapse now threatened the Livonian Germans and they were saved only by a number of circumstances, which, however, only postponed their capitulation for a time. These factors favourable for the Germans were primarily Moscow's unpreparedness for an offensive war on a wide scale. At that time the manorial system was still in its embryo; the cavalry forces of the nobility in military service were still small in number. The Grand Prince of Muscovy had not yet at his command the large reserve of Tatars and other warriors of the steppes that Ivan IV, the conqueror of Kazan and Astrakhan, had after him. On the other hand, in the person of Grand Master Plettenberg, Livonia possessed one of the best condottieri of that time, who skilfully handled the newly-arisen infantry, consisting of mercenary Landsknechts. A colleague of such knight Commanders as Sickingen, Goetz von Berlichingen, Frundsberg and others in the service of the Hapsburgs, Maximilian, and Charles V, Plettenberg encountered the attack of the Russians with the mercenaries he had hired for Livonia without the local knights taking any part in the fighting. Victorious in the first engagement, he was defeated in the next and obliged hastily to conclude peace with Moscow, i.e., actually to capitulate. By a promise to pay tribute to Moscow the Livonian Order temporarily ransomed itself from capitulation, thereby opening the prospect of Livonia's subsequent financial subordination to Moscow.

Plettenberg, the last really active Grand Master, was only an outstanding military leader; he was not a political leader and administrator. In the period of the Protestant Reformation of the twenties of the sixteenth century he failed to unite the country under



ST. BASIL'S CHURCH  
*in the Red Square, Moscow. Built 1552-1560*



his leadership and become the secular ruler of Livonia as his colleague in Prussia, Grand Master Albrecht of Brandenburg, succeeded in doing. Livonia remained a loose federation of Knightly Order and Episcopal domains, together with the independent cities of Riga, Reval and Dorpat, and had very little resemblance to the homeland of the colonizers of the Baltic, "The Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation." The different ranks of the Livonian Federation, *i.e.*, the lower clergy, the Knightly and Episcopal Orders and the burghers, displayed little political acumen. In the midst of this combination of small, heterogeneous political bodies feudal strife was rampant. The Grand Master was in constant conflict with the Archbishop over the command of Riga, over the disposal of the revenues from property and duties belonging to the city. The big towns were in conflict with the knights over the right to trade with the peasants, over the right to grant asylum to peasants who fled from estates where they were registered as serfs, etc.

The idea of calling up a general levy for the defence of Livonia was out of the question. The concept of Livonia as a state, as a common fatherland, did not exist. The landowners and burghers were still floundering in the feudal concepts of the Middle Ages. The Landtag, which was but an assembly of small, independent rulers, had no budget and collected no regular taxes. The federation had no finances. The nobility were afraid to arm the peasants because the latter would immediately have turned their pikes against their masters. The knights were unable and unwilling to defend their country against the foreign foe.

In political and social respects the higher ruling classes of Livonia presented a sorry picture. The Reformation had been carried out in Livonia as a purely financial operation and as the transition to a free, carefree, irresponsible and even dissolute secular life. The Grand Masters who succeeded Plettenberg (Brüggeney, von der Recke, Galen and Fürstenberg) were either senile old men in their second childhood, or else shrewd financiers who, though incapable of governing the organization of their Orders, were well able to arrange their own private financial affairs and further the interests of their kinsmen. The bishops lightheartedly permitted



"the free preaching of the Bible," but on the quiet they profitably traded in their holy office, connected as it was with the handling of rich properties, and then hastened beyond the borders of the empire, mostly to Westphalia, where the first thing they did was to marry in order to live on the money they had accumulated in Livonia. After obtaining from the bishops and the Grand Masters the privilege of unrestricted exploitation of their fiefs—now converted into their absolute private property—and to exploit the labour of the peasants for the cultivation of their estates, the nobility became indifferent to politics and neglected military affairs. They had become transformed into a landlord class, and all their thoughts were concentrated on preserving their social privileges. To give this a moral appraisal, it was the reign of indolence, idleness and extravagance. The drunkenness and depravity of the squires are mentioned by all the witnesses of those times.

The Russian conqueror could meet with no resistance on the part of the upper classes in the Livonian Federation. In this respect the struggle between the Russians and Germans in 1558 differed from the wars of 1242 and 1502. In the later struggle one side launched vigorous and systematic attacks, whereas the other was struck with consternation and panic; it fled in disorder, sold its country and sought for new protectors who might take the place of the old feudal rulers, Grand Masters and bishops who had scattered in terror.

The Livonian War, the biggest of all the wars waged by the Russians in the sixteenth century, was at the same time an important political event in European history. From the thirteenth to the sixteenth century Livonia had been part of the then collapsing German Empire, of the vast medieval state built up on the basis of a feudal hierarchy. These obsolete, loosely-connected political entities, the remains of inter-tribal unions which had not united and had not acquired national features at the time money economy and extensive commodity exchange were developing, inevitably had to fall victims to the strivings for conquests of new states based on the domination of a single nation and energetically pursuing a national policy.

The Livonian War not only revealed the military superiority of the Russians over the Germans, but also showed that in political development, the Moscow State of the sixteenth century had far outstripped the German Empire, which had remained stagnant under a thirteenth-century system.



The countries around Livonia were interested in acquiring the southeast coast of the Baltic. Like Muscovy, the Lithuanian-Polish State needed an outlet to the sea for direct communication with the West in order to dispose of its raw materials and obtain manufactured goods. The Scandinavian countries, Sweden and Denmark, had no direct commercial interest in the Baltic. They acted rather as the gatekeepers of these outlets, after the manner of the medieval knights who lay in wait for merchant ships on the sea routes and for merchant caravans at river crossings and on mountain passes. The profits obtained from collecting transit duties from overseas trade were so great that a fierce struggle arose between the two Scandinavian countries over the Baltic. This struggle became particularly intense during the Seven Years' Northern War of 1563-1570, which coincided with the second period of Ivan Grozny's war against Livonia.

Germany too was highly interested in Livonia's fate. The Hanseatic League, the old maritime federation which was overthrown at the end of the fifteenth and beginning of the sixteenth century, was striving to regain its commercial position in the East and gazed with mixed feelings of hope and fear at the growing power of Moscow. It is interesting to note how Germany dreamed of leaning on Moscow, of exploiting her physical strength in order to recuperate, of rejuvenating herself at her expense, and how at the same time individual members of the collapsing empire dreaded the unknown, mysterious eastern giant.

England, the chief vanquisher of the Hanseatic League, invaded the Baltic Sea on the heels of the retreating Hanseans. Having hewn a path to Muscovy for herself *via* the White Sea in 1553,

the English ensured for themselves a monopoly of the northern trade in the Moscow State. Not satisfied with this, they set out to gain possession of the other commercial centres of the Eastern Power. Claiming the predominant role, they, in 1553, entered Narva, which had been vanquished by Ivan IV, began to ship cloth to this place and succeeded in driving from the market the Hanseatic merchants who traded in Flemish cloth. This drew another big power into the intricate struggle for the Baltic trade, namely Spain, since industrial Flanders was one of her possessions. The two rivals, England and Spain, whose struggles in the western waters of Europe filled the sixteenth century, found another field of conflict, *viz.*, Livonia.

Moscow diplomacy, having no real allies among the claimants to Livonia, tried to profit from the conflict between the rivals for command of the Baltic. Moscow had long sought for rapprochement with Denmark against Sweden. Ivan IV had only to revive the policy of his grandfather, who, as far back as 1493, had concluded a treaty with Denmark for the partition of the domains of the Knightly Orders in Livonia. Good relations with the warlike, enterprising and well-armed country in the gulf was regarded as being so important that in 1562 the Dyuk Viskovati, Moscow's finest diplomat and evidently an expert on Danish affairs, was sent to Copenhagen.



The first campaign, that of 1558, impressed the western countries with the extraordinary might and striking power of the East-European state.

Among the different comments on the successes achieved by the Moscow Tsar in the beginning of the Livonian War there is a letter by the French Protestant Hubert Lange, who lived in Wiltonberg, Saxony. In August, 1558, Calvin learned from his correspondent that "the Muscovite State has laid waste to almost the whole of Livonia and has captured Narva and Darbat [*i.e.*, Dorpat]. It is said that quite recently it captured Reval [characteristic as an exag-

geration of the Russian victories], a large seaport with a very convenient and safe harbour. In Lübeck a fleet is being equipped—the money being provided by the Saxon towns—to assist the Livonians. But this is nothing more than preparation for an easy victory for Mosch, who is mustering eighty to one hundred thousand horsemen. The Polish King is remaining an idle onlooker at this tragedy, but Mosch will knock this indolence out of him when she occupies Livonia, for Lithuania, Prussia and Samogitia<sup>43</sup> border on her. Nor does it seem that the Muscovite ruler is appeased. He is 23 years of age, and from early youth has exercised himself in the use of arms and is by nature very fierce; his love of war has been still further stimulated by a number of successful wars against the Tatars, of whom he says he has slain as many as three or four hundred thousand. He always carries with him three captive kings, among whom is the one from whom he captured Kazan. Recently he fiercely attacked the Swedish King, who was able to purchase peace only with money. *If any power in Europe is destined to grow, it is this one* (si ullus principatus in Europa crescere debet, ille est)."

Livonia—if one may speak of this conglomeration of East Baltic feudal barons in the singular number—did not prepare for war. The aged, absolutely incompetent, Grand Master Fürstenberg hoped for the assistance of the Polish-Lithuanian monarch, Sigismund II, with whom only recently (in 1557 in Pozvol) a treaty had been concluded by which the Livonian Order became a vassal of Poland. At his disposal, as well as under the command of his deputy Kettler, there were only small forces of volunteers and mercenaries, who were unable to cope with the, for that time, vast cavalry armies which Ivan IV hurled against them every year from the Novgorod border lands. Fürstenberg was going to the relief of Narva, then besieged by the Russians, but hastily retreated on receiving news of its surrender. The same unsuccessful manœuvre was repeated by his successor Kettler, who feared to go to the relief of besieged Dorpat. Only Philip von Bell, one of the second-rate commanders, well known for his courage, prepared to give battle to the Russians by occupying a strong position surrounded

by marshes South of Fellin; but here the hostility of the Letts and Estonians towards the Germans told. The local inhabitants helped the Russians to outflank Bell's camp, and the whole of the latter's force was exterminated in the Battle of Ermis.

In general, all the weaknesses of the system prevailing in the country made themselves felt: the strife among the different estates, the rivalry of the towns, and the downtrodden condition of the rural population. Very soon events took place in Livonia which resembled in miniature the peasant war in Germany in 1525. The peasants rose in revolt in the rear of the knights who were facing the Russians. A representative from the villages of Western Estonia was sent to Reval to invite the burghers to join forces with the peasants against the nobility. The Livonians regarded the Moscow conqueror as the protector of the lower classes. It is interesting to note that on the first occupation of Narva the "best people" hastened to leave while "the common people" willingly took the oath of allegiance to Ivan IV.

The fortified cities and castles, for the abundance of which Livonia was famous, failed to withstand the Moscow artillery. In 1558 Narva was obliged to sue for a truce owing to the cannonade. The burghers sent a messenger to the Grand Master to inform him that they could no longer stand the fire. Kurbski tells us about the fierce bombardment of Dorpat with "fiery balls and stones" which compelled the town to surrender. In 1560 the Boyar Morozov shattered the walls of the famous Fortress of Marienburg within a few hours. In the very first year of the war the Russians captured as many as twenty fortresses. All the knights fled from the castles they occupied even before they were attacked. In Estonia the Russians reached the very walls of Reval. Voyevoda Peter Ivanovich Shuiski confidently called upon the burgomasters of Reval and Riga to surrender on pain of utter ruin.

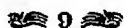
Still more astonishing to Europeans than the victories achieved by Russian arms must have been the confidence and perseverance of the diplomacy and commercial policy pursued by the Muscovites. Ivan IV skilfully took advantage of the rivalry between the Hanse town Reval and Narva, which up to that time had never been

permitted to join the Hanseatic League and had served as an entrepôt for Russian hides, furs, wax, flax, hemp and polish that were exported to the West. While Reval was still resisting the Tsar, the latter did all in his power to win over the merchants of Narva. The town was freed from the duty of quartering troops. The Narva merchants obtained a charter granting them the right to trade duty-free all over the Moscow State and also to have unhindered intercourse with Germany. The Moscow voyevoda provided seed corn, oxen and horses for the villages in the environs of Narva. Narva obviously gained by joining Moscow, as was evident from the new buildings that quickly began to be put up in the town.

At the same time the Tsar took energetic measures to assimilate the regions—now restored to Russia—of Eastern Livonia adjacent to Lake Peipus, which had been the object of ancient Russian colonization as far back as the time of Yaroslav the Wise. Lands in the area taken from the Germans were distributed among sons of the boyars, and Russian churches were built in Narva and other towns.

In the Reichstag, the assembly of representatives of the German Empire held in 1560, Albrecht of Mecklenburg, whose domains were proclaimed in danger of Muscovite invasion, stated in great alarm that the "Moscow tyrant" was beginning to build a fleet in the Baltic Sea, and that in Narva he was converting merchant ships which belonged to the town of Lübeck into warships and was putting Spanish, English and German captains in command of them. He proposed that the Netherlands and English governments should be urged to cease supplying arms, provisions and other merchandise "to the enemy of the whole of Christendom." He insisted that the German Empire should go to the assistance of its members and prevent the eastern ruler from establishing himself in Livonia. After carefully listening to this plaint, the Reichstag ordered that an official embassy be sent to Moscow, in which Spain, Denmark and England should take part, to offer to conclude a treaty of perpetual peace with the Eastern Power and to call upon it to stay its conquests.

The German Emperor and the Reichstag were very much alarmed by the successes achieved by the Moscow Tsar. Measure after measure was passed to prohibit trade with Muscovy *via* Narva, and those engaged in selling arms to Moscow were sternly prosecuted. But Lübeck came out as a supporter of Moscow and of freedom of trade in the Baltic. At an assembly of princes in Rostock in 1564, summoned by the emperor to bring about a reconciliation between Denmark and Sweden, Lübeck stated that the Moscow Tsar, like all other sovereigns, wished to enjoy freedom of commerce with the western countries, and that with the extraordinary capabilities and enterprise of the Russians the Tsar would soon achieve his object. "Today he has four vessels, within a year he will have ten, then twenty, forty, sixty and so on." The same thing, quoting Lübeck, was said in the following year, that is 1565, by the enemy of Muscovy, Augustus of Saxony. He warned the emperor of the formidable naval power that was growing in the East. The Russians were quickly acquiring a fleet and were recruiting skippers in the West. When the Muscovites become proficient in naval matters it would be impossible to cope with them, he said.



Notwithstanding the important military successes he achieved in 1558-1560, Ivan IV was still far from his main goal. He regarded Narva as the first stage towards the possession of sea routes. His aim was to get Reval and Riga in order to acquire closer approaches to the western countries. Nevertheless, Moscow's powerful drive hastened the collapse of the already tottering Livonian Order. The distribution of the lands of the Order and of the bishops among Denmark, Sweden and Poland was an extremely unfavourable event for Moscow. Instead of one feeble opponent, several strong claimants appeared on the scene, and of these, agreement could be reached only with the more remote one, Denmark, which had occupied the Island of Oesel. The Swedes, who had taken possession of Reval, and the Poles and Lithuanians who had established

themselves in Riga, at the mouth of the Dvina, became insurmountable obstacles to Moscow's outlet to the sea.

Difficulties in fighting the new enemies were encountered in the very first year after the partition of Livonia (1561). Moscow was unable to muster a well-armed infantry, and the troops of Ivan IV sustained several defeats at the hands of the Lithuanians. Incidentally, Kurbski was routed at Nevel. These setbacks shook the Tsar's confidence in his voyevodas, and this explains why he took personal command in the campaign of 1563.

Evidently the plan of this campaign was drawn up on the initiative of Ivan IV himself. A force of eighty thousand men which had been concentrated near Mozhaisk set out for Polotsk under the supreme command of the Tsar. Ivan Grozny intended first of all to strike the enemy a decisive blow in the territory of Byelorussia, to advance into the very centre of those ancient Russian lands, in order to compel the enemy to retire from Livonia; Polotsk, a most important fortress on the Dvina, was situated on the line of communication between Lithuania and Livonia. The town was important in itself for its commercial connections with Riga and as the outlet for the whole of Southwestern Rus.

The capture of Polotsk marked another victory for Moscow's heavy artillery. Delighted with the recovery of this Russian town and region, Ivan IV wrote to the Metropolitan: "The prophesy of the Russian saint, the miracle worker Peter the Metropolitan, concerning the city of Moscow, that it will raise its hand against its enemies, has come true. God has shown us, unworthy ones, his boundless mercy, and has placed our patrimony, the city of Polotsk, in our hands." The Tsar's return to Moscow after the Polotsk campaign was celebrated with the same pomp and splendour as had been his return after the capture of Kazan.

Ivan Grozny was justly proud of his victory. In the mechanism of the military monarchy all the cogs, levers and driving belts operated with the utmost precision and fully answered the purposes of the organizers. The administration of the newly-subjugated region was also built on military lines. The instructions issued to the Polotsk voyevodas in 1563 began with strict and meticulous



injunctions to take measures to protect the town from fire. The local inhabitants were deprived of all weapons and were permitted to enter the town, "with the exercise of the utmost caution," only on great holidays. At night the voyevodas themselves had to take turns to go through the town with lanterns. The constables had to close the city gates and bring the keys to the chief voyevoda. Patrols had to guard all the roads. Suspicious persons were to be quietly deported to Moscow by roundabout routes *via* Pskov and Novgorod. At the same time the voyevodas were ordered to see to it that the courts functioned with celerity and justice with due consideration for *local customs*. Every man when summoned to court was to attend without fear, and only those who failed to answer the summons twice were to be haled to court by force, and information about the dues, quit-rents, and so forth, which they had formerly paid was to be obtained from the inhabitants.





## THE SUCCESSES AND SETBACKS OF THE MILITARY MONARCHY

In describing the reign of Ivan IV historians since the time of Karamzin used to divide the entire reign (1547-1584) into two periods: the first fifteen or sixteen years (from 1547 to 1563 approximately) were described as the happy period of wide administrative reforms, successful wars and the introduction of a wise administration, based on inherited principles and methods and conducted with the guidance of experienced counsellors. The ensuing twenty or twenty-one years (from 1563 to 1584) were regarded as the period of an exhausting struggle, failure in foreign policy and deviation from traditional methods: a period of chaos in administration, the rule of unlimited authority, and tyranny.

This division into the two periods was at the same time an appraisal of the personality and activities of Ivan Grozny. It served as the main grounds for belittling his role in history, and for including him in the list of the greatest tyrants of the world. Unfortunately, in studying this question, most historians concentrated their attention on the changes in the internal life of the Moscow State and paid little attention to the international situation in which the Moscow State found itself in the two periods of the reign.

The stern critics seemed to have forgotten that the keynote of the entire second half of Ivan IV's reign was continuous war, and of the most arduous war the Great Russian State had ever been obliged to wage.

To form a correct judgment of the place Ivan Grozny occupies in the history of the sixteenth century, one must first of all examine the connection that existed between events in foreign and domestic politics in the period of the gravest crisis the Moscow State experienced.

### 1



IN 1563 IVAN IV was at the apex of his power. He had an outlet to the sea, was in possession of the eastern half of Livonia, and had hewn for himself a commercial and military road along the Western Dvina. His fame as a military organizer and his popularity stood high. But the victory achieved under the Tsar's personal command was followed by the reverses sustained by his voyevodas in the beginning of 1564. Ivan Grozny had drawn up a far-reaching plan for an advance into the interior of Lithuania. Shuiski, the conqueror of Dorpat, was to have advanced from Polotsk, and the Voyevodas Serebryani-Obolenskys from Vyazma, and after meeting, they were all to march against Minsk and Novogrudok. But Shui-ki marched "with extreme negligence" and carried his accoutrements in sledges. He was suddenly attacked by Radziwill near Vitebsk and was defeated near Ula. The other unit sustained defeat at Orsha.

Then followed events of no strategical importance, but of extremely great political import, *viz.*, the treason of Kurbski, in whom, as late as 1562, when the Prince was Commander-in-Chief in Livonia, the Tsar had placed unlimited confidence.

Only if we take into account the extremely strong impression created in Moscow by these military and political disasters will we be able to understand the government crisis of 1564, the executions, Ivan Grozny's departure for Alexandrova Sloboda, the banishment of the boyars and the formation of the Oprichnina as a special corps of picked soldiers under whose protection the ex-

tremely alarmed Tsar was ready to place himself and his state amidst the treason that was rampant all around him.

Russian historians have at their command a document of exceptional interest in the form of the correspondence between Ivan Grozny and Kurbski, which enables us to judge not only the moods but also the world outlook of the principal characters during one of the most dramatic moments of the period. It must be said that there is nothing equal to it in modern West-European literature. We have before us an epistolary duel, in the style of the humanist age, between two publicists, one of whom appeals to the purely feudal and ridiculously obsolete "right of departure," but actually betrays his people and his country, while the other stands forth as the reformer of the state system, who regards himself as the organizer of a strong centralized state. In this heated verbal duel the two antagonists strive to excel each other in scholarship and in literary skill.

Ivan Grozny's reply to Kurbski reveals his entire character: clever, talented, full of seething energy, and extremely irascible. What well-turned phrases about authority; what clear political thinking; what confidence in his monarchical mission, and how chaotically encumbered it all is with superfluous historical references and useless names of people and emperors! How much of the superfluous, how much repetition, what a superabundance of abusive epithets and accusations!

There arises before us in full height the great figure of a ruler of peoples and a great patriot. The example of a sovereign endowed with only limited power which Kurbski quotes are unconvincing for Ivan Grozny. "All these are not masters in their realms," he writes. "They govern as their servants command them. Since the beginning the Russian monarchs rule their entire realm, and not the boyars and notables." The monarch is the vehicle of the law, of authority and supreme wisdom, and has unrestricted right to try the subject. "How can he call himself a monarch if he does not build himself?" "A Tsar must always be circumspect; sometimes meek and sometimes wrathful; kind and meek to the virtuous, but to the vicious—wrath and punishment. He who is not such

is no Tsar; for a 'Tsar is fearsome not to the virtuous but to the vicious. If ye would have no cause to fear authority, do good; if ye do evil then go in fear. The sword is not carried in vain, but to punish the vicious and to reward the virtuous."

This letter to Kurbski expresses for the first time the Tsar's inward and perhaps never before this clearly expressed anger against the Supreme Council headed by Sylvester, which limited the royal power. "For you and all your evil deeds are to blame, for you and the priest have decided that I shall be Tsar only in name, while you and the priest will govern," he wrote. He reverts to this painful subject over and over again and it is evident that he felt greatly humiliated under the tutelage of the stern cleric. During the period of his enforced idleness and subordination he worked out for himself the whole theory of government, which condemned the rule of the clergy as an irrational system which must inevitably lead the state to its doom, because "priests are ignoramuses," ignorant of state affairs. "And is it contrary to reason and conscience to convince an ignoramus that a Tsar rules by the grace of God? No kingdom governed by priests has ever escaped ruin."

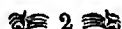
This theory he backed by numerous examples quoted from history, the latest of which was the fall of Byzantium, which was weakened by the influence of the church. The happiest period in the history of Israel was the time when the spiritual and temporal powers were separated, he argued. Misfortune appeared at once when "Eli the High Priest took upon himself both holiness and kingship." The fall of the Roman Empire was due to the combination of two authorities in one person. The conclusion to be drawn was clear: "A priest cannot perform the duties of a King."

The ideas expressed in this letter were deeply thought out. A capable and impressionable pupil of Macarius, Ivan IV imperceptibly yielded to the influence of the clergy. But in the very literature to which his teachers had introduced him he found a polemic against theocracy and arguments in favour of "monarchy," of a powerful and progressive secular authority. This new theory, which had captivated his mind, gradually merged with the growing consciousness of his own great mission in life, with anger

against those who bound him hand and foot and blocked all outlets to his talent. For a long time Ivan Grozny's mind and will encountered severe obstacles; all the more strongly and confidently did he express his new convictions later.

He could never find a balance, a golden mean. His feelings overflowed and his passions bubbled like a spring. He did not simply remove Sylvester and Adashev, but wished them evil, wished for their doom. He did not confine himself to the charge against them of supercrogation of power, of squandering the Tsar's treasures, but ascribed to them "diabolical designs." In this respect Ivan IV was only a product of his times.

We would recall the characterization of Ivan IV given by Lomonosov in his *Brief Annalist* in 1760: "This vigorous, shrewd and brave monarch was of a very fierce temperament."



It has long been the custom in Russian historiography to depict the institution of the Oprichnina primarily as a gesture of horror and despair, which conformed to the high-strung character of Ivan IV, before whom yawned a chasm of disloyalty and treachery among what had seemed his best servants and counsellors.

This naive and romantic presentation of the subject must be abandoned once and for all. It is time to understand that the institution of the Oprichnina was primarily a great military-administrative reform, called forth by the growing difficulties of the great war for access to the Baltic Sea and for the opening of intercourse with Western Europe. Present-day historians, whose world outlook was moulded in the period between the two world wars of 1914-1918 and 1939-1945 will also abandon the mistaken method of relating the events of foreign policy, wars and international relations divorced from social and political movements and changes at home.

It seems to me that historians must note the fact that the Livonian War gave rise to a number of difficulties not encountered in previous wars; and to remove these difficulties it was

necessary to employ new military-technical methods. During the conquest of the Volga region the Moscow cavalry armies fought against warriors like themselves in conformity with strategy and tactics of an extremely simple nature. It was quite different, however, in the western war, in which the Moscow forces encountered the intricate military art of the commanders of European trained mercenaries. An extremely important defect from which the Moscow forces suffered was the absence of discipline and solidarity. The army did not represent a uniformly organized tactical entity. The effect was felt of the remnants of the independence exercised by the former appanage princes and big boyar owners of patrimonies who still maintained their local courts, administered justice, collected dues for themselves and granted patrimonies and manors to their dependents as if they were their own lieges. They joined the Tsar's levies together with their own units of serf soldiers whom they had placed on their lands; with their own "liverymen," as they would have been called in England during the Wars of the Roses.

These relics of a dying past made themselves strikingly and sharply felt in the betrayal of his country by Kurbski and his flight to Lithuania, taking with him the boyars' sons and servicemen most intimately and closely connected with him. Not so marked, but no less harmful, were the efforts on the military organization of other features of the appanage system. The opposition of the solid stratum of ancient aristocracy, which was greedy for office, prevented the monarch from promoting efficient and capable people from the lower orders. It may also be true that some of Ivan IV's old comrades-in-arms, who had displayed zeal and courage in the eastern campaigns, participated in this new war reluctantly, as if not wishing to understand its significance. Before betraying his country Kurbski was negligent in the performance of his duties. More than once, probably, plans of military operations dictated by the centre were not carried out locally without sufficient grounds for this remissness.

In introducing, in 1550-1556, the reforms for improving the military-manorial system, the government, on this question, as in

others, permitted the presentation of petitions containing schemes and advice. Among the latter is that signed by Ivashka Peresvetov, which amazes one for the talent and publicist zeal it reveals. In his petition Peresvetov proposed that the reorganization of the armed forces go hand in hand with an increase in the power of the monarch. Peresvetov describes himself as a public servant of Lithuanian-Russian extraction who had been in foreign, *i.e.*, Hungarian, Polish and Walachian service, and had voluntarily chosen service in Moscow. He refers with emphasis and pride to his poverty, to the fact that he had risen from obscurity. He compares himself to the "warriors of needy appearance" who came to Augustus Caesar and to the great Alexander and gave these rulers wise counsel.

Peresvetov, in a very peculiar way, combined the exaltation of monarchical power with defence of the interests of the lower public servants, among whom he included himself. He detested the higher aristocracy, wished to have complete equality among all servants of the state, and opportunity for the free development of their talents also for the common gentry. Only monarchical power could create such opportunities for the lower aristocracy. On the other hand, it was in the monarch's interest to gain the services of all strata of the aristocracy in order to improve the military system and to create a flexible, vigorous and invincible military force. Peresvetov combines all the ideas in a general political maxim: "Above all else a Tsar should love his troops." He was of the opinion that the notables in Moscow wanted to take the care of the army out of the Tsar's hands, to divorce him from it, to leave only civilian affairs in his hands. He advised the Tsar not to yield to such treacherous designs, for his safety depended on the loyalty of the army.

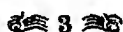
Peresvetov urged that the state should be reorganized on the lines of strict military discipline. The administration must be strict and justice stern and swift, like courts-martial. The main point of the reform, in his opinion, was to deprive the notables of the right to have their private military retinues. He advised the Tsar to choose the best of the soldiers who were subordinated to the



nobles and to form them into a picked corps of his own. After that he was to rule untrammelled and remorselessly crush all resistance.

He contrasted Mohammed II (1451-1481), the conqueror of Constantinople and impious infidel, to the Orthodox Christian Tsar Constantine, whom the former vanquished and who gave free reign to the will of the notables and neglected his troops. He concludes his picture of the rational, formidable and just military monarchy instituted by the Moslem with a psalm of praise, in which there is a shade of the religious tolerance of the humanist age: "The Turkish Tsar, Mohammed Sultan, has introduced great justice in his Kingdom. Though an infidel, he has greatly pleased God; if to this justice were added the Christian faith, the angels would converse with him differently."

Though of Szlachta origin, this publicist appears to have been very unfavourably impressed by the experiment made by the Polish-Lithuanian aristocracy. He was by no means enraptured by the liberties enjoyed by the Szlachta of that country. On the contrary, he was of the opinion that the subordination of this class to stern military and administrative discipline was a condition of national strength.



Comparing the advice offered by Peresvetov with the institution that became known as the Oprichnina one must admit that the publicist had made a number of proposals which the reformer accepted.

We shall observe that no little time intervened between the proposal of the various schemes and their execution. Peresvetov wrote his petition before the capture of Kazan. He had in mind only the struggle on the eastern front and had no knowledge whatever of the Baltic war. All the more interesting, therefore, is the light he throws on the political situation. When he referred to the intention of the notables to divorce the Tsar from his troops and to prevent him from playing an active part in the

government of the country, he had in mind nothing more nor less than the close Duma, or Council, which had surrounded Ivan IV since 1547, and which, in the period of the Hundred Chapter Council and the Kazan campaign, exercised unlimited authority.

Thanks to Kurbski's testimony, this Duma, which was headed by Sylvester and Adashev, enjoys a high reputation among historians; the beginning of Ivan IV's cruelties and caprices are usually ascribed to the decline of its influence. There can be no doubt, however, that in this too much attention has been devoted to personal conflicts and private grudges and too little to the political aspect of the matter. It would have been worth noting that, quite characteristically, Kurbski called the close Duma, of which he himself was a member, the "Elected Rada." No other writer called the Duma by that name; and this reactionary Russian boyar did not use that term fortuitously. His eyes were turned to the "Pans' Rada," the Supreme Council which limited the power of the Polish King. This representative of an ancient princely line and the peer of the Lithuanian and Polish Pans was naturally attracted by the example of the western neighbour's oligarchy. By applying to the close Duma of the Moscow Tsar the title of the Upper Chamber of aristocratic Rzecz Pospolita, he merely proved that Ivan IV was justified in complaining that his counsellors had divorced him from public affairs, had restricted his power, had encouraged the boyars to "gainsay," had distributed rank and lands without authorization, and so forth. Peresvetov, the bitter enemy of the aristocracy, throws unexpected light on the activities of the "Elected Rada" when, quite early, in the period when the Tsar reposed the fullest confidence in his counsellors, he advised the Tsar to lean on the mass of minor aristocracy and resolutely break the power of these counsellors.

Peresvetov, astonishingly enough, anticipated the idea of a "strong" government and the concept "unlimited monarchy" and he, perhaps, should be regarded as one of the principal inspirers of the policy of the period after 1564; for one of the most notable events of the early years of the Oprichnina was the break-up of the princely strongholds, the dismissal of Court servants and

the disbandment of the special units in the service of the former appanage princes and big patrimony owners. The Tsar put the Oprichniks, *i.e.*, new men in the service of obscure origin, in the places of the appanage Princes of ancient line, such as the Yaroslavskys, Belozerskys, Rostovskys, Suzdalskys, Starodubskys, Chernigovskys, and others.<sup>41</sup> and tore the ancient "knyazhata" and boyars from the soil of their ancient domains and forcibly transplanted them to new regions where they had neither roots nor connections. It may be allowed that Ivan IV introduced too much passion into the struggle against his formerly trusted counsellors; perhaps, too, he cast suspicion upon representatives of the ancient aristocracy who were neutral in this struggle and entertained no ambitious designs as politicians. Be that as it may, the fact that Ivan Grozny went to extremes gives us no ground for assuming that he used the Oprichnina, the institution of which was an important military-administrative reform, as a weapon in a war against phantoms.

In his correspondence with Kurbski, Ivan IV picturesquely described how Sylvester, the leading figure in the governing circle, had gathered around himself men whom he considered desirable, *i.e.*, that he had organized a party with the intention of reducing the role of the Tsar to that of a mere ornament. In his negotiations with Lithuania he makes an interesting charge against Kurbski himself to the effect that the latter had laid claims to the title of "Heir of Yaroslavl" and wanted to "rule over Yaroslavl." True, this expression is too dramatic and exaggerates the actual state of affairs; but we must bear in mind that numerous princely strongholds were still in existence up to 1564, and that the big "notables" claimed the "right of departure." After the example set by Kurbski, the Tsar was obliged to compel the prominent boyars to take an oath not to go abroad. This proves that they did not accept the new conception of the state. They still regarded themselves as the rulers. They were still burdened with the prejudices of appanage princes. Kurbski's ambitions were fully satisfied when, as a member of the supreme government council, he found the Moscow Tsar's will subordinated to his own

and that of his colleagues. But when this situation was shaken he could find only one way out, *viz.*, to betray his country, to desert the state. His views fully coincided with the world outlook of the big Polish Pans, of the German Fürsts and of the French seigneurs of the sixteenth century, who either compelled the monarch to submit to their governmental pressure or, if they failed to do so, betrayed their respective countries and proclaimed themselves free and independent leaders, or sovereigns, as it were. In 1521, Bourbon, Constable of France, a Prince of the royal blood and a kinsman of the king, in revenge for personal wrongs, deserted to the side of Charles V, Emperor of Germany, and took command of troops which were fighting against his country; and Kurfürst Maurice of Saxony, a faithful servant of Charles V in 1548, deserted the latter in favour of France in 1552. These are striking western parallels of Kurbski's conduct. In this respect Muscovy neither lagged behind nor ran ahead of the West-European states. 1

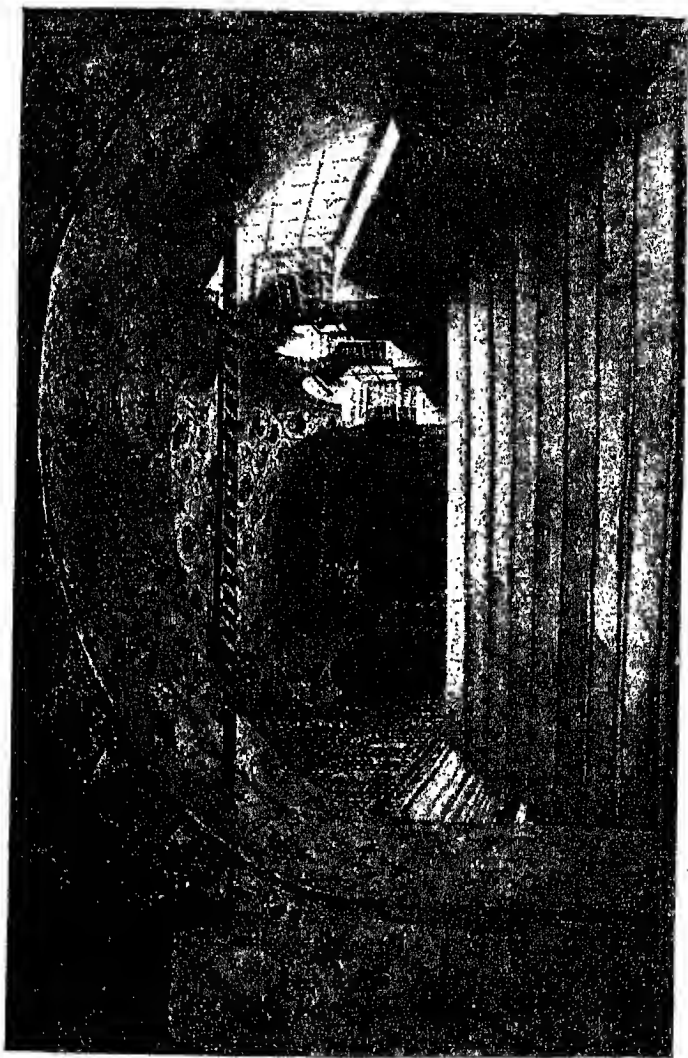
Ivan Grozny skilfully uses against the oppositionist and traitor other strata of the people, and here his theories coincided with those of Peresvetov and Yermolai-Erasmus, each of whom, in his own way, advised that the notables should be kept under strict control and that greater reliance should be placed on the labours of the peasants and on the services of soldiers of humble rank. In the rescripts he sent from Alexandrova Sloboda to Moscow in January 1565 the Tsar divided his subjects into "goats and sheep" and distributed his wrath and favours between the two sides. He banished the boyars, voyevodas and high officials for embezzlement, for their ill-gotten wealth, for ill-treating Christians, and for neglecting their duties. He expressed his displeasure with the clergy for having covered up the misdeeds of the former. As regards "guests," *i.e.*, foreign merchants, Russian merchants and all the Orthodox Christians in Moscow, he urged them to cast away all doubts, as he entertained no wrath or displeasure against them.

Attention must be drawn to a characteristic item which reveals how Peresvetov's views coincided with those of Ivan IV. Enumerating the various misdemeanours committed by the no-

tables against the monarch, the publicist called them "magicians and heretics who robbed the Tsar of his happiness and of his royal wisdom." The charge was a terrible one for those times. Never, perhaps, was belief in witchcraft, black magic and evil charms so widespread, and never were there so many witchcraft trials in the West and in Moscow as in those days. It is difficult to say to what extent Ivan Grozny was inclined to believe in the power of witchcraft and black magic; perhaps, in attempting to rouse his suspicion that the people around him were designing to use black magic against him, Peresvetov resorted to an extremely dangerous weapon against them. Kurbski relates that in 1560 Sylvester and Adashev were convicted without an opportunity to defend themselves because they were regarded as miscreants and magicians. He also relates that in Moscow a woman of high virtue and ascetic life was put to death because her extraordinary spiritual qualities gave rise to the suspicion that she was a witch who was capable of causing the Tsar's death by her charms.

In their characterization of Ivan Grozny most historians lump all his executions together and point to them indiscriminately as proof of his cruelty. A distinction should be drawn, however, between political and witchcraft trials. The former expressed white-hot wrath against traitors and were prompted by motives of a rational nature; the latter expressed something elementary, manifested when Ivan IV shared the superstitions of his contemporaries. It would be interesting to know what Kurbski himself would have done in Ivan Grozny's place. He implicitly believed in the power of witchcraft, and he ascribes the change in the Tsar's temper, his turn towards cruelty, to the power of magic exercised by the Tsar's "evil" counsellors who had taken the place of the "good" ones.

Again we take the opportunity to remind the reader that as regards superstition sixteenth-century Muscovy was not far behind the West. The period of humanism and the Reformation was the period when witch-hunting was most rampant; and it was the Puritan sects, who prided themselves on having purged Christianity of paganism, who engaged in this most.



*Steps leading to the southern entrance of St. Basil's Church in the Red Square, Moscow*





If we regard the institution of the Oprichnina in 1564 as a military-organizational measure we will realize that it was a continuation of the reform of 1550. At that time one thousand men of the new service were granted estates around Moscow. Now, Ivan Grozny, too, chose "princes and nobles and sons of Boyars, Court<sup>45</sup> and Town,<sup>46</sup> a thousand head," but he settled them in the uyezds around and beyond Moscow—Galich, Kostroma and Suzdal—and in the towns on the other side of the River Oka. The reformer, however, went much further in developing military technique. It is very interesting to compare Peresvetov's counsels with the way the army reform was carried out.

The author of the petition urged the formation of a picked corps of twenty thousand "young men, brave and skilled in the use of firearms." He had in mind the difficult and heroic struggle waged against the Crimeans in the South. He conceived of a tireless warrior Tsar who lived heart and soul with his army; and it is not surprising that he was inspired by the personality of Mohammed II. The Turkey of his day had produced another restless conqueror of the same stamp in the person of Suleiman II (1520-1566). For this role, however, Ivan IV was not quite suited.

True, in his *Narratives*, in connection with the Kazan campaign of 1552, Kurbski wrote: "The Tsar himself, filled with ambition, began to arm against the enemies and gathered troops most numerous and brave, and having no desire for repose in a splendid palace [as is the habit of western kings today] he sat whole nights over his [astrological] charts and other diabolical mummeries." But the same Kurbski relates that after the capture of Kazan the Tsar gave no heed to the "wise and shrewd" counsellors, and instead of remaining in the subjugated city for the winter to consolidate his gains, he returned to Moscow. Probably he had taken command of the army with reluctance, as was particularly the case in 1571 when he declined to take command



and allowed the Crimean Khan to reach Moscow and burn it. On every occasion that he was in command of military operations however—at the capture of Polotsk and twice in Livonia, in 1572 and 1577, as well as during the Kazan campaign the troops fought well and made good previous reverses.

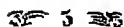
Although lacking the gifts of a military leader, Ivan IV possessed technical talent in engineering and building and a wide and practical outlook on questions of military organization. The division in 1564 of the lands and the people into an Oprichnina and Zemshchina, *i.e.*, civil provincial government, was carried out in conformity with a well thought-out plan. In the Zemshchina the old caste arrangements and service ranks remained. In the Oprichnina, however, the Tsar gathered all the elements that he regarded as suitable for his purpose, irrespective of birth, precedence, class prejudices and claims, and in placing men in different ranks he was guided exclusively by their military abilities, their talents and their merits. Step by step he collected under his personal, purely military, administration a central group of lands, and placed the Oprichnina in control of the most important state roads that led from the capital to the frontiers. The "Zemshchina Service" was shifted to the outlying regions, where it functioned under the surveillance of the central military administration.

There can be no doubt that the real arrangements of 1564 were affected by the irritation caused by the military setbacks and the first betrayals. They represented a sort of temporary structure erected with great haste. Later, the content of this original framework was constantly changed. Ivan Grozny himself expressed the significance of this reform in the following words written in an ironic petition he submitted to Simion Bekbulatovich,<sup>47</sup> the baptized Tatar in whose favour he temporarily abdicated in 1574: "Sort out men, boyars and nobles, and the sons of boyars and domestics." Indeed, he seems to have been continuously sorting out the members of the serving class and its domains, shifting and re-shuffling its individual representatives, distributing and redistributing them without end.

Ivan IV merely brought to fruition the military monarchy principle which had been initiated in the period of his grandfather. The principal institution of the military power—the manorial system—developed and gained strength in the struggle against the Tatar Hordes in the East and in the South. From the middle of the sixteenth century the western war became a powerful stimulus to its extension. Armed with the experience of his predecessors, Ivan Grozny tried to make it as flexible and productive as it possibly could be. The Oprichnina reflected a conception of the service class, in conformity with which it was to serve as a completely obedient instrument of the centre. The system built up from 1564 onwards strained the military monarchy organization to the utmost.

The fact that the reform was carried out during a difficult war, and that it was complicated by the conflicts with the princes and the old boyars, among whom there were probably no few who sympathized with Kurbski, caused it to assume such acerbity. The institution of the Oprichnina was accompanied by the wholesale banishment or execution of the boyars and the confiscation of their property. In this internal, pulverized war the Oprichniki, the newly-trusted assistants and servants, were, perhaps, given too free a hand; but these terroristic measures did not constitute the substance of Ivan Grozny's reforms. Striving to introduce a new military system the reformer enjoyed neither repose nor elbow-room. The reform was designed to remove those who were dangerous to the country and to utilize the idle elements in the interests of the state; the resistance it encountered transformed it into a weapon for their extermination. As a consequence, the reform developed into an internal war.

Ivan Grozny's policy, both foreign and domestic, clearly expressed the *class* character of the rising monarchy. Moreover, the definite social change that was exceptionally marked by the institution of the Oprichnina in 1564 should be noted. The Tsar acted mainly in the interests of the middle landed gentry, from whose representatives he formed what was, to use J. V. Stalin's classically precise term, an *aristocratic military bureaucracy*.



Most of the historians of the nineteenth century were wont to regard the Oprichnina exclusively, or mainly, as an instrument of nascent despotism. It is true, of course, that in 1558-1564, Ivan IV made a series of extremely vigorous efforts to throw off the oligarchy that had grown up around him; he strengthened the monarchy, however, not only by means of terrorism, but also by the methods which had been recommended to him by Peresvetov and Yermolai-Erasmus, *i.e.*, by drawing closer to the army and recruiting for it men from different classes of society. The impression of such an appeal to the patriotism of wide sections of society is created by the Zemski Sobor, or National Assembly of 1566, which was convened not long after the institution of the Oprichnina, and was intended to demonstrate, as it were, the importance the government attached to the temper of the army.

Russian historians are now agreed that the Assembly of 1566 was the first real Zemski Sobor (the latest attempt to depict the Assembly of 1550, with the Tsar's speeches to the people, as a Zemski Sobor is now unanimously relegated to the realm of fantasy). Science has discovered the predecessors of "the council of all the land." These are the assembly of various ranks of the army, an example of which was given by Ivan III in 1471, and, on the other hand, the Sanctified Assembly, the council of the supreme hierarchy. In the period of the tutelage the government combined both forms of assembly for the discussion of the church reform, and the Stoglavi Sobor of 1551 was a combination of the "authorities" (the clergy), the "Synkletos" (the Boyars' Duma) and representatives of the army.

In 1566 Ivan IV revived the form of Assembly of 1551 for secular purposes. He gathered together the clergy, the Boyars' Duma in full strength with its secretaries, the dyuks of the various government departments, and representatives of the higher ranks of the government service; but he introduced an important innovation by inviting, for the first time, merchants and traders. As for the motives which prompted the convocation of this assembly, Ivan IV,

in this case, reverted to the traditions of his grandfather. Just as Ivan III had consulted his troops before launching the campaign against Novgorod, so Ivan IV submitted to the assembly of military men and merchants the question as to whether they were willing to continue the war for the possession of the whole of Livonia, considering that Poland had proposed the partition of the country on terms which practically meant that Riga would remain in her hands.

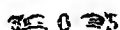
In addition to the presence of merchants, whose appearance for the first time at a great state conference indicated their growing importance in the state, the Assembly of 1566 possessed other original features. Among the lower ranks of government servants, which constituted a separate group, mention is made of squires from Toropets and Lutsik. Evidently, these were members of the minor aristocracy from the most immediately threatened border regions who served in the forces directly engaged in the war and who happened to be in Moscow during the negotiations with Poland. Although few in number, they occupied a prominent place in the assembly, and their opinion was canvassed separately. The government of Ivan Grozny permitted the free exchange of opinion. We learn that among the views expressed at the assembly was the dissenting opinion of the Dyak Viskovati, the director of foreign policy, who proposed that the assembly should consent to the partition of Livonia, with the stipulation, however, that the king should withdraw his garrisons from the occupied towns.

The Assembly of 1566 was a peculiar combination of the ancient and the new, of tradition and political ingenuity. V. O. Kluchevski called attention to the predominance at this assembly of representatives of the celebrated "thousand" which had been recruited in 1550 and had settled in the environs of Moscow to be ready to carry out the government's commissions. On the other hand N. Myatlev has shown that the aristocracy elected in 1550 occupied in subsequent decades a large part of the important posts in the army command, in home administration and in diplomacy. We see, therefore, that in spite of the acuteness of the crisis of 1564-1565, in spite of the banishments and executions, Ivan Grozny retained the old, tried cadres, which he had enlisted for his administration, and

even surrounded himself with their representatives at an important assembly to discuss an extremely important question of policy.

The Assembly of 1566 was a very skilful move in Ivan IV's policy. Satisfying the ambitions of the army, and still further strengthening the loyalty of the minor aristocracy in his struggle against the aristocratic boyars, the Tsar, at the same time, gained a splendid position in international politics. When sending Unmoy-Kolychev as Ambassador Extraordinary to Lithuania with definite instructions to refuse to make peace without Livonia, he stood forth as a popular monarch in a halo of glory who had only just assured himself of the unanimity of his army, the clergy and the merchants. Could anything remotely resembling it be displayed by his antagonist Sigismund II, with his unwieldy, unyielding and garrulous Diet, that assembly of squires who, unlike the Moscow aristocracy, had ceased to be soldiers? That was the time when the military monarchy of the Moscow State must have been conscious of its superiority over the Szlachta republic!

If we may speak of inventions in politics, Ivan Grozny deserves to be regarded as the inventor of the Zemski Sobor, just as Simon de Montfort was the inventor of Parliament, and Philip IV the Handsome the inventor of the States General.



One of the first of Ivan IV's successes in the Livonian War was, as we have already seen, the occupation of Narva, thanks to which direct sea communication was opened with the West. The treaty concluded with Denmark in 1562 reveals the calculations and hopes the Moscow government rested on this opening of a sea route. The Tsar stipulated for free transit through Kopougov (Copenhagen) and all the towns of the Danish Kingdom "for the merchants of ourselves the Tsar and Grand Prince, and for the merchants of Great Novgorod and the Pskovians, and of all the towns of the land of Muscovy, as well as for the Germans *of the towns of my patrimony, the land of Livonia*" (my italics—R. W.). Commerce was to be free and direct between the merchant and their customers in Den-

mark without the intervention of any factors or middlemen. Provision is then made for more distant journeys by Russians, in which Denmark was to play only the role of country of transit, and for return journeys through Denmark of foreign merchants from Russia. The treaty stated: "And those of our Tsar's and Grand Prince's merchants and guests, Russian and German, who travel from Kopongov to overseas countries with merchandise, and those from overseas countries who pass by the Kingdom of Denmark through the sea gates, the Sund Straits," must be allowed free passage.

We have no definite information as to whether Russian merchants actually travelled to Copenhagen and beyond, but German narratives speak definitely about the arrival of foreign merchants in Narva.

According to information from Lübeck dated 1567, German merchants arrived in Narva from Hamburg, Wismar, Danzig, Breslau, Augsburg, Nürnberg and Leipzig. At times foreign merchants gathered in Narva in very large numbers, and sometimes merchandise was shipped here in such large quantities that they had to be disposed of at a very low price. The ancient Livonian Chronicles of Nienstedt tell us how the Tsar rejoiced greatly because "*by this means he hoped to establish himself in Livonia most easily*" (my italics—R.W.). Foreign factors were treated with great respect in Narva. They were invited to the Court of the Lieutenant-General and treated like favourite children.

In 1567-1568 there was a great deal of talk in Germany about Muscovy's successes. Some were ready to believe that the largest empire in the world was being built. The opinion was mooted that if the Moscow Tsar occupied Reval he would soon establish himself in the middle of the Baltic, on the Islands of Gottland and Bornholm, and would become a greater menace to Germany than the Turkish Sultan. Many representatives of the merchants believed, however, that it would be more profitable to establish direct relations with Moscow and to win her over as an ally against Turkey. "*Then the entire trade of Russia, like an inexhaustible reservoir will be in the hands of the Germans*" (my italics—R.W.).

The Bavarian Veit Seng, a merchant who had lived in Moscow for a fairly long period, tried to fire the imaginations of his fellow countrymen with his story about the "mighty Tsar" and to win their support for the conclusion of an alliance with Moscow. He told them about the Tsar's formidable army, magnificent artillery and his immense Treasury, and urged the necessity of establishing postal communication between Muscovy and Germany and of creating greater facilities for Muscovites to travel abroad. The Russians, he said, were extremely capable and quick to learn. Since the occupation of Narva they had acquired considerable experience in trade. It was necessary to create opportunities for them to study science and technology.

As if in answer to these Russophile proposals, a debate was opened in the Reichstag in 1570 on "the frightful harm and great peril to which the whole of Christendom, and the German Empire and all the adjacent kingdoms and lands in particular, would be subjected as soon as the Muscovite established himself in Livonia and the Baltic Sea." "From all over," wrote an anonymous author, "from the West, from France, England, Scotland and the Netherlands, in spite of the embargo, arms and provisions are being shipped to Narva. The shipment of saltpetre, among other things, is extremely important for the Russians. If they did not receive it in such large quantities, they would be unable to continue the war, and would soon sue for peace. Large quantities of silk, velvet and linen are shipped to Muscovy. The Russians, who up to now had been unable to weave cloth, are now learning everything, and, of course, will grow wealthy.

"Many are selling to the Tsar *golden and silver vessels*; the stocks of precious metals in Germany are running low and the price is rising exceedingly. Lastly, the Moscow State will soon have accumulated sinews of war in such large quantities that it will become the most powerful state in the world. What is most dangerous is the fact that many governments are supplying the Muscovites with experienced shipbuilders, navigators and builders of harbours, ports, bastions and fortresses, and also armourers, who are familiar with the Baltic Sea, its tides, harbours and so forth. All this traffic

between Europe and the Tsar has greatly emboldened the latter. He is now striving to become the master of the Baltic. It will not be difficult for him to achieve this, firstly, because of the abundance of shipbuilding timber in Russia, of iron for anchors, and of other materials for rigging and sails, fat, tar, and so forth. His country *abounds in population*, and it will be easy for him to find men for his crews. The Russians are sturdy, strong and brave, and will undoubtedly make splendid sailors. The Tsar also possesses much merchandisc and will, therefore, be able, by means of trade, to obtain all he needs from other countries." (My italics.—R.H'.)

It is remarkable how the opinions of the friends and foes of Moscow coincide concerning the Russians. Both foresee the rapid growth of the future Russian navy. Both admit the Russians' quickness to learn and their industrial and technical ability. Both recognize that Moscow's policy is resolute, persistent and consistent. The country is extraordinarily rich, and the government possesses the ability to direct commerce, acquire the goods it needs and to expand its realm in every way.

Interesting as an admission of the great might of the Moscow State is the project for a new political combination in Europe, drawn up also in 1570 by Liebenauer, a Bavarian merchant and a correspondent and friend of Veit Seng. This project was drawn up for submission to the German Emperor, and in it we find a comparison of the strength of the different states of Europe.

Liebenauer starts out by pointing to the grave danger that threatens the German Empire on the South from the Turks, who were pushing up the Danube, and from the North, where the Muscovite had conquered the whole of Livonia, except Reval and Riga, which would meet with the same fate in the near future. With the forthcoming surrender of Reval by the Swedes, the Russians would gain possession of the finest harbour in the Baltic Sea. The empire was losing large slices of its territory, one after another, and the enemies were advancing towards its very heart. From whom could support be obtained? The Catholic rulers (Protestant rulers are not mentioned) could render no assistance either because, like France, they were indifferent, or because, like Spain, they had troubles of



their own. The main thing was that none had the resources with which to recruit a large army and maintain it for several years, and in these times war imposed a colossal financial strain. There was only one way out of the difficulties in which the empire found itself, and that was to make peace with the enemy who represented the least of two evils, *i.e.*, Moscow; to cede Livonia to her and conclude a close alliance with her with the object of jointly turning their weapons against the more formidable enemy, Turkey.

Two sets of arguments—negative and positive—were advanced in favour of this combination. If peace were not concluded with the Grand Prince of Moscow immediately, the latter, offended by the rejection of his repeated peace offers, would go further in his conquests of the Baltic coast. He would take the Islands of Gotland and Bornholm from Sweden and Denmark, Prussia, Pomerania and Mecklenburg from the empire itself, and even penetrate into Silesia, for the empire was not protected by fortresses on that side and he could pass the Castle of Memel without a siege. As a positive argument the religious motive was urged. After all, the Moscow State was a Christian power, whose support could be obtained against the infidel. "An alliance with the Grand Prince would lead to incalculable benefits and prosperity for the whole of Christendom; there would also be a glorious encounter with and resistance to the tyrannical and most dangerous enemy, the Turk, who is sitting so heavily on the neck of the beloved fatherland of our glorious German people." A further point in favour of an alliance with Moscow are the long-established connections and friendly relations (reference is even made here to the marriage between a German King and the daughter of Yaroslav, Grand Prince of Kiev, in the eleventh century). The main thing is that the Moscow Grand Prince is the *most mighty sovereign in the world, second only to the Turkish Sultan*.

"Four years ago the Grand Prince, marching only against the town of Polotsk situated in Lithuania, brought into the field, as can be proved, over a hundred thousand horsemen, not counting foot soldiers, of whom there were over twenty thousand, and an incalculable number of others. What could he do against the Turk if he wished to utilize his own strength properly and put it to serious use?"



RUSSIAN WARRIORS IN THE CAMPAIGN AGAINST KAZAN  
*Part of the icon 'The Church Militant' Middle of the XVI century*





The opinions and judgment of the Germans concerning the rapid and menacing growth of Russian commerce and navigation and about the Russians' impetuous drive and capabilities are somewhat contradicted by the conduct of Englishmen in the Moscow State and by the attitude of the Moscow government towards them.

Although the appearance in Moscow of Chancellor, one of the survivors of the Willoughby Expedition of 1553, seems to have been a fortunate accident, which relieved the English navigators of their search for a northern route to India, actually, the English soon set themselves important independent tasks in Muscovy itself. In exchange for a promise to ship cloth and military supplies through the mouth of the Northern Dvina they obtained exclusive rights to utilize the northern route, the right to trade duty-free all over the Moscow State, right of free entry and departure, and also right of free transit by the Volga route to Persia and Central Asia. Meanwhile, they clung to the idea of pushing their way into India.

The 'privileges of the English did not cease, nor were they even reduced, after Ivan IV acquired a base in the Baltic. On the contrary, the capture of Narva in 1558 led to the further expansion of English plans. In addition to the distant route *via* the White Sea, which was closed for the greater part of the year, a very much shorter one was opened for them. Entering Narva with other foreigners, the English displayed exceptional energy. Their competitors, the merchants of Lübeck, reported that the most successful in commercial affairs in the Moscow State were the English. They had warehouses in all the large towns. Through Russia they reached Persia and Armenia; of such a thing nobody had heard or dreamed before. From the White Sea they hoped to find a route to India.

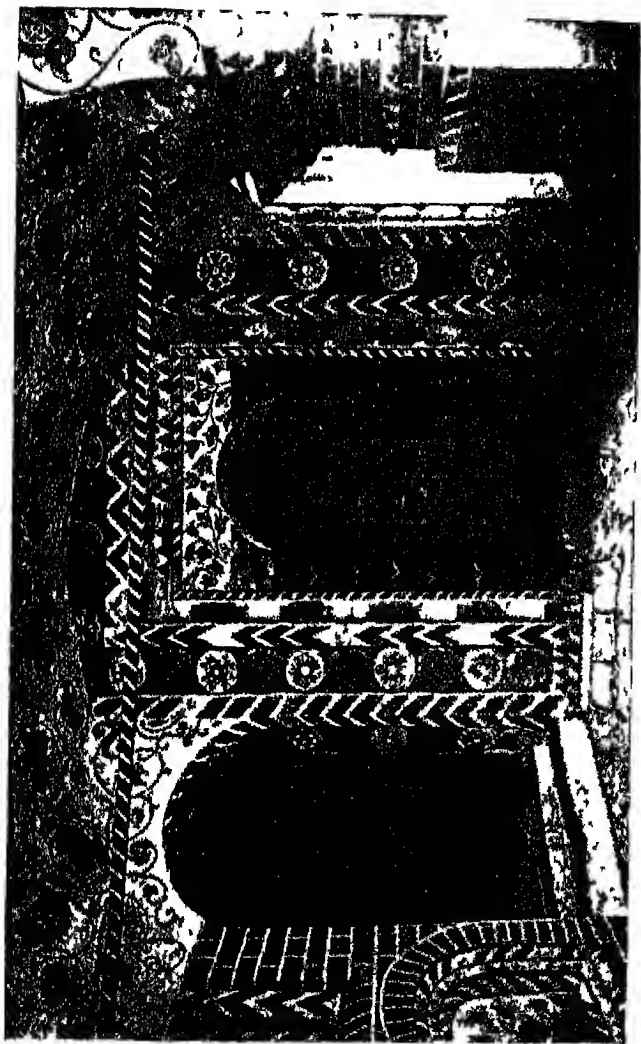
Evidently the English had even wider designs, *viz.*, to monopolize all the commerce in the Moscow State. True, Ivan IV refused to grant them such a monopoly; but he did grant them exclusive rights to trade with Kazan and Astrakhan. By the Charter of 1569 the Tsar granted an English company the right to prospect for iron ore in the region of the River Vychegda and to erect an iron smelt-

ing works, for which purpose he placed a large tract of forest land at the company's disposal. The English were allowed to mint English money at the Russian mints; they were permitted to use post horses and to hire Russian labourers.

How are these concessions on the part of the Moscow government to be explained? Much was due to military and political considerations. To be able to fight his technically well-equipped western neighbours, Ivan IV needed supplies of equipment, powder, lead, artillery and, lastly, instructors. War materials and military men could be obtained most easily from England, which at that time was striking the last blow at her old rival, the German Hanse. We are not surprised, therefore, to learn that among the Russian troops which attacked the stronghold of Fellin in 1560 there were Scottish foot soldiers.

In general, Ivan Grozny had strong leanings toward England, which, in the dark years of his reign, developed into a fixed determination to become related to the Queen of England and even to find an asylum in England in the event of the fall of his dynasty. This explains why the Tsar was more indulgent to the English ambassadors than to any other if they violated the strict etiquette of Moscow. It is not surprising that in his own intimate circle he was called the "English Tsar."

Important as political motives and sympathies may have been, it is nevertheless surprising that the Moscow government was evidently ready for their sake to sacrifice the interests of the Russian merchant class, for it was precisely for the benefit of the latter that he had so perseveringly tried to gain access to the Baltic. The answer to this enigma must be sought for in the peculiar organization and status of manufacturers and merchants in the Moscow State. Unlike the European merchants, the Moscow merchants enjoyed no independence and formed no corporations, guilds, or companies. They were servants of the state. This official position was characteristically reflected in the commissions the richest merchants received to collect customs duties, which they had to guarantee with their own capital, also in the custom of inviting to Moscow prominent "guests," or merchants, from the provinces, which was on a par



*Southern entrance to St. Basil's Church in the Red Square Moscow*



with the custom of promoting provincial aristocrats to posts at Court in the capital, and, finally, in the government appointing chiefs of "guest-hundreds," i.e., the division of the merchants into administrative categories, or groups.

Hence we find big merchants in government commissions in the capacity of expert advisers. At the time of Chancellor's second visit to Moscow a special council was set up to examine the claims for rights and liberties put forward by the English. To this council Moscow merchants were invited. "Guests" participated in the political Assembly of 1566 in the capacity of state officials.

The manufacturers became accustomed to their role of organs of the administration. When the Oprichnina was formed as a close military administration for the purpose of drawing the virile forces of the country to the centre, the Stroganovs, who later became famous as the colonizers of the Perm region and as pioneers in the conquest of Siberia, hastened to join the ranks of this new state institution. The attitude of the Stroganovs towards the Oprichnina, and their general behaviour, are extremely instructive. They faithfully carried out the government's commissions in the outlying regions and, in addition to developing the profitable concessions which they had received, they built fortresses and protected the Kama region from attack by the Siberian Tatars.

With the opening of commerce in Narva, Moscow merchants operated in the Baltic under government direction. In 1566 the Voyevoda Zabolotski petitioned the Corporation of Rival to grant right of transit to Russian merchants who were travelling to Wismar. In this and other similar cases, Ivan Grozny persistently advanced one and the same demand, *viz.*, that his subjects be granted free transit overseas to Europe.

In entering into trade the state was guided exclusively by the interests of the Treasury. It was not inclined to take risks or engage in speculative, if profitable, enterprises. Under these circumstances, it was natural that the state should be inclined to cede to foreigners those branches of manufacture and commerce which it could not directly exploit itself. The concession of the Vychegda iron mines to the English was precisely such a method of inviting foreigners to



develop spheres which the government could not or had no desire to develop.

The above-mentioned facts reveal to us another feature for the characterization of the Moscow State. The government organized all the forces of society for war, mustered all industrial activities for the purpose of financing war, and strove to make all the talents, all the capital and all the energy of the country serve it, and it alone. It took upon itself a great deal of leadership, leaving little independence for society at large.

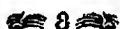
These arrangements were most unusual for the Europe of that time and foreigners were misled by them. In the West-European countries the merchants, as an independent force, grew out of piracy on the high seas and formed themselves into a body before the national state was formed. Hence, West-European observers regarded the subordinate and obscure status of the Moscow merchants and industrialists, and the direction of commerce by government edict, as symptoms of barbarism, and foreign entrepreneurs dreamed of obtaining monopolies in this country where there was so little independent enterprise.

The English petitioned Ivan Grozny for such monopolies again and again. The same ambition fired the imagination of the merchants of Lübeck, once the capital of the Hanseatic League. Nearly all the petitions submitted by that city to the Reichstags and assemblies of German Princes, in which Hanseatic merchants painted in glowing colours the advantages to be obtained from the Russian trade, were based on a far-reaching plan to become the director of trade all over the Moscow State.

Having sprung out of the rivalry among commercial expeditions, the West-European merchants forgot that neither in the Roman Empire nor in the Arabian Caliphate did commerce bear such a character. In these large states the government was both creditor, customer and director of commercial affairs, while the merchants acted as state officials. A similar situation arose in the Moscow State.

This, however, gives no ground for concluding that by its measures of centralization and regulation the Moscow government restricted the development of internal trade.

In his work, *Essays on the History of Feudalism in Russia*, B. D. Grekov proves magnificently that the middle of the sixteenth century was a period of extreme expansion of the home market in the Moscow State. "Internal trade," he wrote, "becomes constant and acquires a mass character when from among the population there springs a large number of direct producers, who, producing no grain or other agricultural produce, stand in need of the wholesale shipment of agricultural produce from outside." He is of the opinion that this stage had been reached by the regions of the Moscow State that were already united as a single entity. Particularly eloquent proof of this, in his opinion, is the appearance in the rural districts of a well-to-do peasant class exclusively engaged in trade, and its subsequent and very natural migration to the towns, where they opened shops and warehouses. In the long run, the English realized the strength and significance of state trade. It is not surprising that an English merchant company applied for admission to the Oprichnina.



Ivan Grozny's great military undertakings of 1552-1566, which brought about the colossal political and commercial expansion of the Moscow State in so short a period, would have been impossible without the rapidly growing military and industrial energy of the middle and lower classes of the regions outside of Moscow. It is to his credit that he succeeded in organizing these forces for the purpose of carrying out far-reaching plans. One of the characteristic symptoms of the development of social energy at the time was the growth of cultural consciousness in Moscow society, the consciousness of the need for education that arose among these classes. A most striking illustration of this cultural growth is the short but dramatic history of printing in Moscow.

The facts appertaining to this subject—fragmentary, sometimes enigmatic, dating from 1563-1568—occurred in the very years that were noted for rapid successes in foreign affairs, and for the turbulent domestic conflict connected with the institution of the Oprich-

nina. In 1563 the first printing press was started in Moscow under the direction of Ivan Fedorov and Peter Mstislavets. We know nothing about these men except what we learn from their productions. Their activities, which commenced with such success, to judge by their splendid edition of *The Apostle* in 1564, with its beautiful illuminations (in the Italian or Graeco-Constantinople style?), were abruptly interrupted by their flight from Moscow to Lithuania. This enforced departure was evidently preceded by the wrecking of their printing shop (the information on this score is vague: Fletcher, who refers to a fire at the "Moscow" printing shop several years before his arrival, does not mention the names of the printers).

One thing is beyond doubt, however; the printers left not of their own free will, but under strong coercion. The motives of their flight to Lithuania had no relation whatever to those which prompted the flight of Kurbski and other traitors. Ivan Fedorov refers to internal enemies and vehemently asserts his patriotism. In the postscript to the Lvov edition of *The Apostle* (1574) he says that he was obliged to flee "because of the great wrath often vented upon us not by His Majesty himself but, by many high officials, officials in Holy Orders and preachers [my italics—R. W.] who, prompted by envy, falsely accused us of numerous heresies, wished to convert good into evil, and at last to wreck a divine work, for it is the habit of the evil-minded, unlearned and those unversed in learning, not being filled with spiritual wisdom, to pronounce evil words in vain. For such is envy and hate that they come of themselves, not knowing how they proceed and on what they rest; it was they who drove us from our soil and native land and from our kinsmen to settle in a strange, foreign land."

In these sincere, moving words we discern a personal, professional tragedy; we hear the passionate protest of the humanist and enlightened scholar against the obscurantists who created obstacles for the "divine" art of printing, and who in their blindness rebelled against learning. The terms used here reveal Ivan Fedorov as a humanist, a typical representative of the movement for enlightenment which swept through the whole of sixteenth-century Europe. The Moscow printer stands before us as a peer and fellow thinker

of the Venetian Aldo Manuzio and the Parisian Estienne, at once scholars, technical entrepreneurs and propagandists, true sons of the new industrial age of which printing was one of the most characteristic phenomena.

The idealistic form in which he couched his protest did not prevent the humanist from pointing concretely to the enemies and persecutors of the art of printing who had united in a reactionary bloc. It is not difficult for us to decipher the term "high officials" as meaning the aristocracy, the princes and the old boyars, who dreaded the growing power of the middle classes, the lower nobility and manufacturers and merchants, and were therefore opposed to their enlightenment; the term "officials in Holy Orders" as the higher clergy who feared the penetration of heresy in secular life as a result of the spread of "false doctrine" and the undermining of their authority; and the term "preachers" as the lower clergy, the friars and monks who gained their livelihood by copying books, and who were immediately affected by the, for them, fatal competition of cheap printed publications.

All these groups of alarmed reactionaries formed a close alliance and declared war on the spread of literacy and enlightenment among the broad masses of the people; and in this case the reactionary elements were the very same who in general resisted Ivan Grozny's reforms, the very same upon whom the newly-instituted Oprichnina came down with all its might. The cultural opposition coincided with the political opposition.

Thus the dispute about the introduction of printing in Moscow developed into a general social and political struggle; and the printing of books proved to be one of the weapons employed in the internal conflict and could easily become the issue in open street collisions. We can picture to ourselves the aristocratic "officials" and "officials in Holy Orders" vested with high clerical power zealously inciting an ignorant mob to wreck and especially to burn printing offices as the form of punishment that was prescribed for all those who engaged in black magic. The printing press was depicted as a weapon of the Evil One and a printing office as the workshop of the Devil.

If the motives which actuated the reactionaries are clear to us we can indirectly draw conclusions concerning the ideology of the advocates of printing and primarily of the Tsar, who, later on, amidst the difficult struggle he waged, was unable to save the enterprise he had opened in Moscow. He himself has handed down to posterity evidence of his sympathies and intentions in this field. In the postscript to Ivan Fedorov's edition of *The Apostle* we read: "He [the Tsar] began to think of introducing printed books as they have in the Greek, Venetian, Frygian [a misprint for Fragian, i.e., Italian] and other languages." These words may be taken as an indication of Ivan Grozny's liking for the Italian forms of printing and his desire widely to spread these most perfect technical methods.

The researches of A. S. Orlov, Member of the Academy of Sciences, and of I. V. Novosadsky remove all grounds for regarding the case of Ivan Fedorov the Printer as a casual and isolated episode in the cultural life of Moscow. The art of printing had long been knocking at the gates of that great eastern state. We read of the arrival in Moscow—as early as 1492—of the Lübeck printer Gontan in the guise of a diplomatic agent; and Hans Schlitte, who in 1547 recruited a whole army of technicians for Moscow, had been commissioned also to bring craftsmen skilled in the art of printing.

In addition to the attempts of private persons to introduce their new industry in the very heart of the Moscow State, official proposals in this direction were made by governments friendly with Moscow. Such a proposal was made to Ivan IV by the Danish King Christian III who, in 1552, wrote: "I am sending, my beloved Brother, our dearly beloved servant and subject Hans Missenheim with a Bible and two other books which contain the essence of our Christian faith. If this our proposal and the two books and the Bible are accepted and approved by you, my beloved Brother, by the Metropolitan, the patriarchs, the bishops and the other clergy, our servant will print the aforesaid works *in several thousand copies* [my italics—*R.W.*] after translating them into your language, so that by this means it will be possible in a few years to promote and facilitate the welfare of your churches and other subjects zealous in the glory of Christ and in their own salvation."

At that time Denmark had accepted Protestantism, which the Reformists regarded as the restoration of the true and original Christianity of the Gospel. The Danish government was prompted primarily by missionary objects, and that is why the Bible was sent as the first specimen of the art of printing; but the proposal that the craftsman who was sent should be commissioned to reproduce the books in such a large quantity, and in such a short space of time, gives grounds for the assumption that the entrepreneur—in this case the Danish government—was motivated by the practical consideration of obtaining a ready market for books. This calculation may have been based on the information provided by the Danish government's agents who had pointed to the growing demand for popular books in Moscow society and, consequently, to Moscow's readiness to open a book market.

The Danish government tried to arrange for a profitable foreign trade for its missionary craftsmen and to acquire a ready market for the sale of the products of the new industry. The same object—religious propaganda and the marketing of a new type of merchandise—was also pursued, although in a different ethnical and cultural milieu, by the Moscow government in its new possessions, in the Volga region, the Urals and Siberia. Here the government's policy, directed as it was toward the pacification of the subjugated peoples, bears features of religious fanaticism: Mohammedanism, the faith of the Tatars, was persecuted; the pagans—Chuvashis, Maris and Udmurts—were forcibly converted to Russian Orthodox Christianity. New bishoprics were instituted and a new clergy appeared. For its own instruction and for its missionary purposes the latter needed books, which became one of the most important instruments of administration. A striking illustration of these calculations is provided by the multitude of books which were discovered during the division of the property of the Stroganovs. The deeds of 1578 state that in all 208 books of 84 titles were divided among the heirs, and of these 86, i.e., well over a third, were printed books. These figures are extremely large for those times, bearing in mind that only fourteen years had passed since the first book was printed in Moscow. The Stroganovs were the principal pioneers of Moscow

culture in the Maritime and Ural regions, which were inhabited by Mohammedans and pagan peoples who were subjugated not only by force of arms but also by missionary violence. Having joined the Oprichnina in the early period of its existence, and generally sensitive to the designs of Ivan Grozny's government, the Stroganovs were the vigorous instruments of book propaganda and the book trade in these regions.

As regards the organization of printing, as in all other technical questions Ivan Grozny revealed a profound understanding of the ideas of his age. His policy in this field was in harmony with the interests and the needs of the middle classes of society which were striving for enlightenment. The political position he took up in this field, however, was in jeopardy; he encountered the powerful opposition of the reactionaries.

In Moscow he was unable either to safeguard or restore the art of printing; he was able to save it only in his own immediate vicinity, in Alexandrova Sloboda, the centre of administration. Very characteristic of the almost completely neglected state of printing in the Moscow State is the testimony of the Jesuit Possevin, who was in Moscow in 1581. In his book on Muscovy he wrote: "Books they write themselves but do not print, except for what is sent to the press only for the needs of the state in the town which is called Alexandrova Sloboda [Sloboda Alexandresca], where the Tsar has a printing office."



The important successes Ivan IV achieved in Livonia in the 'sixties, the growth of intercourse with the West and of Russian foreign trade were all largely due to the favourable international position occupied by Moscow. Denmark and Sweden, the two Scandinavian countries which laid claim to the Baltic, were in 1563-1570 engaged in a fierce struggle which diverted their forces and attention from Livonia. At the same time it was possible to safeguard Moscow from flank attacks on the part of the turbulent southern neighbours, the Crimean Tatars. The foreign policy of the Polish-

Lithuanian State was paralyzed by the impending close of the Jagiello dynasty, which had united in an alliance three such diverse countries and peoples as Poland, Lithuania and Western Rus.

At the end of the 'sixties, however, Moscow to some extent lost this advantageous position. The overthrow of Eric XIV in Sweden (1568) and his succession by his brother John III, who was married to a Jagiello, the sister of Sigismund II, presaged an alliance between this Scandinavian country and Poland. At the same time, the Seven Years' War, which had tied Sweden's hands, came to an end. With the accession of John III (1568-1592) the reigns commenced of a number of enterprising Swedish kings who succeeded in utilizing the military aid of the Swedish nobility and in raising an obscure state to the level of a first-class European power. Thus in the North rose up an unexpected opponent who closed Moscow's outlet to the sea; a strange opponent who, possessing no industry, was unable to profit from the advantages of industry and trade, and not engaging in the transit trade, served as a brake in Moscow's progress, as a hindrance to the cultural growth of the numerous and capable Russian people which Poland and Germany deemed so dangerous.

Moscow suffered another series of reverses thanks to the skilful policy pursued by the last of the Jagiellos. Sigismund II succeeded in overcoming the prejudices of the Lithuanian and West Russian Szlachta against the union with Poland, and the decision of the Lublin Diet of 1569 to include Lithuania, Byelorussia and the Ukraine in Rzecz Pospolita, *i.e.*, Poland. Sigismund also succeeded in counteracting Moscow's influence in the Crimea and in inducing the Khan to launch a campaign against Moscow in 1571. This campaign came as a complete surprise to Ivan IV and ended with the burning of Moscow and the devastation of the region beyond it.

These heavy external blows affected internal relations in the Moscow State and gave rise to a crisis in governmental circles. The years 1568-1572 were mainly years of executions, the banishment of aristocrats and confiscation of their property. In scope and intensity the reign of terror of that period far exceeded that of the first



crisis of 1563-1564. In this period the Tsar's closest kinsmen perished, among them being his brother-in-law, Prince Mikhail Temryukovich Cherkassky, the brother of his second wife Maria Temryukovna, a Kabardian Princess, and his cousin, Vladimir Andreyevich Staritsky,<sup>48</sup> the last representative of the lateral branch of the Moscow Grand Princes. The Metropolitan Philip,<sup>49</sup> who had pleaded for the persecuted notables and himself of an ancient boyar family, numerous representatives of the old aristocracy who had long been under suspicion, as well as many prominent Oprichniki, recent favourites of the Tsar, were put to death. Sentences of death, banishment and assassination were carried out against traitors without trial. Again and again discoveries were made of traitors who had plotted to surrender Novgorod and Pskov to Lithuania, and of others who had helped the Crimean Tatars to approach Moscow unobserved.

Those historians who are inclined to regard Ivan IV primarily as a nervous, hysterical character, look upon this traitor-hunting as an excess prompted by an inflamed imagination. They claim that, beset by numerous difficulties, the Tsar became a nervous wreck and lost his mental balance. One cannot but admit that in the executions and banishments of 1563-1572 there is still much that is unclear, numerous enigmas which are difficult to solve. For example, perplexity is roused by the execution of the Dyak I. M. Viskovati, a man of outstanding talent, who enjoyed the Tsar's unlimited confidence and was almost the only one of the period of the "Elected Rada" who survived the first government crisis of 1563-1564. What could Viskovati have been guilty of? Judging by the opinion he expressed at the Assembly of 1566, he opposed the continuation of the war for Livonia, and perhaps he worked in favour of peace with Poland. The struggle for Livonia, which had slipped out of the Tsar's hands in spite of the tremendous efforts he had made to consummate the task so auspiciously commenced, became such a morbid question for Ivan Grozny that he was ready to regard any opposition in this field as treason. But perhaps Viskovati was guilty of a more heinous offence than merely expressing open opposition? Perhaps he was guilty of some secret offence?

Condemnation of Ivan Grozny has been called forth most of all by his march against Novgorod in 1570, where he appeared at the head of a large force of Oprichniki, and where, it is said, he gave the participants in the punitive expedition wide scope for violence and plunder. This unfavourable impression has been created by the absence of objective documentary testimony of contemporaries concerning the Novgorod events. The narrative of the Novgorod annalist is permeated with profound sympathy for his native city and sounds like a bitter complaint; it is an indictment drawn up by the friends and supporters of those who perished in 1570.

What can be brought forward to counter this undoubtedly biased description of the Novgorod events of 1570? We have fragments of Ivan Grozny's confession made round about the period of the reprisals against Novgorod, which show that the Tsar was then passing through a very difficult period of life, that he was suffering from the consciousness of his isolation, desertion, his encirclement by enemies and traitors, and lack of faithful and reliable supporters. This can be felt in the Tsar's correspondence with Devlet-Ghirai,<sup>50</sup> which indicates how deep was the Moscow Tsar's humiliation; and it is felt particularly in his celebrated preamble to his "Testament" of 1572: "The mind is dulled, the body is exhausted, the spirit is sick; bodily pains multiply, but there is no physician to heal them; I hoped that some would share my grief, but none were found to do so; I found none to console me; my good was repaid with evil and my love with hatred."

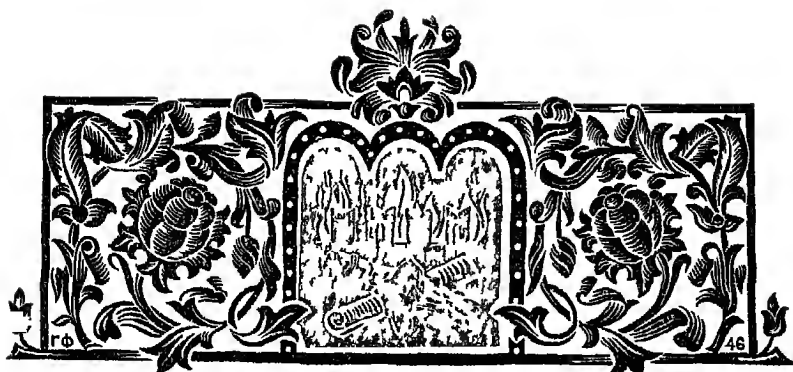
Further on in this instruction to his sons we read: "Owing to the multiplicity of my lawless acts I have earned the wrath of God, I have been banished by the boyars and wander in different lands." And as if anticipating that he would be accused of inflicting unjust punishment and that his beloved child, his picked troops, would be attacked, he wrote: "And you live in love, and *accustom yourselves to the troops as much as possible*. And get accustomed also to keep people and to guard yourselves against them and to win them over in all things; and there are men who serve you honestly, favour and love them and guard them from all, so that none shall persecute them, and they will serve you more faithfully; and those who

are evil *do not banish them in haste, but within reason, and not in wrath.*" (My italics.—R.W.)

In view of these two contradictory statements, each in its own way extremely subjective, are we not confronted by a riddle which it is difficult to solve? And what can be said about Ivan Grozny's subsequent policy? After the wholesale banishments, confiscations, executions and assassinations committed in 1572 through the medium of the Oprichniki, and for the sake of the latter, the system established seven years previously, in 1565, was abolished or modified. The very word "Oprichnina" was henceforth prohibited, and the administration of the sovereign's appanage was named "Dvor," *i.e.*, the Court.

Russian historians have long complained that the investigation of the history of the reign of Ivan Grozny is rendered extremely difficult by the gaps in the sources and the absence of documentary evidence on the most critical periods, among others, on the history of the dramatic quinquennium 1568-1572. This situation has changed very much for the better since the publication of the historical material discovered in the twenties, thirties and forties of the present century.





## THE STRUGGLE AGAINST TREASON

In Russian historical science of the nineteenth century the question of the political, military and social significance of the Oprichnina and the related question of the personal role played by Ivan Grozny were matters of constant scientific controversy. Was the Oprichnina merely the product of Ivan IV's exaggerated fear of the dangers and numerous foes who beset him, an instrument for persecuting mainly his personal enemies? Was this political institution an expression of the caprice of a depraved, tyrannical nature, or was the Oprichnina a deliberate military-strategical and administrative-financial measure and, in its internal structure, a weapon in the struggle against treason, against a stubborn class and party opposition? Was the Oprichnina a combination of great crimes and petty squabbling, or did its institution mark a great political change? Was it a progressive institution, although running to excesses and extremes in some respects? Was Ivan Grozny a narrow-minded, weak-willed man who rushed from one extreme to another under the influence of chance counsellors and favourites, an extremely suspicious and capricious tyrant, or was he a talented, farsighted, feverishly active and masterful ruler who stubbornly pushed forward to his goal?

The above would be an approximate formulation of the conflicting views that were expressed in the scientific controversy. It was impossible to decide the question one way or another because of the lack of documentary proof, and mainly because the inner life of the Oprichnina, the order and development of its institutions remained hidden. Testimony of members of the Oprichnina was also lacking.

The publications of 1924-1942 in a large measure make good this deficiency and enable us to solve some of the riddles that had hitherto confronted investigators of the period of the "reign of terror" of 1568-1572.



**A** GREAT CONTRIBUTION to our understanding of the events of the stern period of the governmental crisis was made by the publication of three documents: 1) the correspondence between Ivan Grozny and Vasili Gryaznoy<sup>61</sup> published by P. A. Sadikov as an appendix to the essay *Tsar and Oprichnik* (1924); 2) I. I. Polosin's translation of *Memoirs of Muscovy* by Heinrich Staden, a German who served in the Oprichnina, with an introductory essay by the translator (1925); and 3) *The Narrative of Albert Schlichting* translated and annotated by A. I. Malcyin (1934). The first of these productions, consisting of one letter written by Ivan Grozny in 1574 and two letters written by Vasili Gryaznoy in 1576, entirely belong to the Moscow governmental milieu and reflects the intimate sentiments of the Tsar and his Oprichniks. The two other productions were written by foreigners who had for a time served in Moscow and had succeeded in safely slipping away from there. They were written abroad and express independent views, free from any pressure on the part of Moscow. In spite of their tendentious character they are extremely valuable, as their authors had been direct participants in, or witnesses of, many of the deeds and events of the period of the domination of the Oprichnina (1565-1572).

The correspondence between Tsar Ivan IV and the Oprichnik Vasili Gryaznoy gives us a very vivid idea of how Ivan Grozny himself appraised the importance of the Oprichnina, and also of the relations between the Tsar and the Oprichniks, of the distance from himself and the iron discipline under which he kept what he thought were his most intimate servants and most faithful assistants during the frightful struggle he waged against internal and external enemies.

In 1573, Vasili Gryaznoy, during a reconnoitring operation on the South front near "Milky Waters" ("Molochniye Vody") either due to his own carelessness or to treachery on the part of the unit under his command, fell into the hands of the Khan of the Crimea. From his captivity he wrote a letter to the Tsar (which has not come down to us) begging to be ransomed, and mentioning the celebrated Divai-Mirza,<sup>52</sup> then in captivity in Moscow, as a man of equal worth to himself who could be exchanged for him. In the remarkable letter of 1574 which has come down to us the Tsar rejected this request.

This letter is couched in the same sarcastic tone we are familiar with in the correspondence with Kurbski, but in this letter, writing freely to his former favourite, Ivan Grozny assumed an even more bantering and stinging tone. It begins with a jibe at Gryaznoy's carelessness and clumsiness: "You write that for your sins you have been taken captive. You should not, Vasyushka, have gone lightheartedly among the Crimean heathens; but once having gone among them you should have kept your eyes open. You imagined that you had come with hounds after hares and the Crimeans caught and bound you. Did you think that being in the Crimea was the same as jesting at my table? The Crimeans do not fall asleep as you do and can easily capture milksops like you. They do not say on reaching another land that it is time to go home. If the Crimeans were women, like you, they would never have crossed the river, let alone have reached Moscow."

Thus, in Ivan Grozny's opinion, the Oprichniks were themselves to blame; they were "women" and "milksops"; but he wanted to reprove the Oprichnik who had fallen into captivity for one other

thing, *viz.*, for appraising himself too highly. "Why do you pose as a great man," he writes, and with his characteristic waywardness he suddenly turns to the subject that was constantly torturing him. . . . "I am afflicted for my sins, and how can I conceal it? Our princes and boyars have begun to betray us as they betrayed our father, and we drew you husbandmen close to our person, wanting from you service and truth." After this angry outburst Ivan Grozny continues in the tone of biting irony: "You command me to give 2,000 for you, whereas for an ordinary captive only 50 are given. How can you, 'a mere youth,' be compared with Divai-Mirza?" "If you were freed you would not bring me, would not capture as many Tatars as Divai-Mirza can capture Christians. If I exchange Divai for you, it will not be a Christian for a Christian: you alone will be free, and on returning you will take to your bed with your wounds; but Divai, when he arrives home, will begin to fight, and how many hundreds of Christians, better than you, will he capture? What profit will that bring?"

Ivan Grozny's ruthless verdict in this case is all the more remarkable for the fact that Gryaznoy was not an ordinary Oprichnik, a base-born, "boorish husbandman." Like Adashev, he came from an ancient if not celebrated aristocratic family, which, at all events, had long served the Great Princes; and he had come to the forefront owing to the active part he had played in the struggle against the oppositionist boyars, in the reprisals of 1570 against the Novgorod betrayal and, lastly, in the 1572 campaign against Livonia, where for a time he was a voyevoda in Narva. During his interrogation in the Crimea it was ascertained that he was a "veremenny" (*i.e.*, an "intimate" or favourite of the Tsar), and this explains why the Tatars demanded such high ransom for him. At one time Gryaznoy had taken advantage of the influential position he occupied and in the absence of the Tsar, who had gone to fight the "Svicski" (Swedish) strangers, or foreigners, had acquired for himself by means of exchange, a fine estate. To all this it must be added that he was a welcome participant in the Tsar's noisy revels; he was a lively conversationalist and a wit, able to amuse the Tsar. At a certain period, however, the Tsar's confidence in him was shaken.

In all probability this happened after the raid of Devlet-Ghirai in 1571, when Ivan Grozny became convinced that the Oprichnina regiments which had been entrusted with the defence of Moscow were militarily unfit and suspected treachery in the ranks of the Oprichnina itself. True, Gryaznoy was not formally banished, but he lost the estate he had recently acquired, and besides, his dispatch to the South front was something in the nature of an honourable exile.

Eighteen months passed after the Tsar's refusal to ransom Gryaznoy. Languishing in captivity, the Oprichnik sent two more letters to Moscow, one after another, in which ardent appeals were accompanied by reminiscences of a happy past and assurances of utmost loyalty to the Tsar and to his heirs. Gryaznoy tried to touch the Tsar's heart by reminding him that he had suffered only because of his zeal in his service, that he was ready to die for the Tsar in expiation of the offences he had committed. He vowed that nobody could help him except "God and the Tsar" and permitted himself to exclaim in ecstasy: "You, Tsar, are like God. You create things great and small!" He tried to win the Tsar's favour also by boasting of his services: here in the Crimea he was combating treason that was being spread among the other Russian captives. Thanks to his exposures, nearly all the traitors had "perished"; only the most notorious of them, Kudeyar,<sup>63</sup> was left, and him, too, he would soon destroy. Lastly, he offered to send to Moscow news from the Crimea and to conduct diplomatic negotiations with the Crimean government.

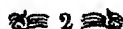
But all in vain! Ivan Grozny remained adamant and, perhaps, was even annoyed by Gryaznoy's meddlesome interference in matters that did not concern him. He had forgiven Kudeyar, and he must have regarded Gryaznoy's promise to conduct negotiations with the Crimean government as downright insolence, considering that Moscow's entire foreign diplomacy was conducted in conformity with the Tsar's strict, and precise instructions and only by his special authority. Moreover, Gryaznoy's long sojourn in the Crimea and the officious zeal he displayed roused suspicion concerning his own loyalty.

After an interesting commentary on Ivan IV's correspondence with Gryaznoy, P. A. Sadikov arrived at the conclusion that the Tsar



highly appraised the Oprichnina as a weapon for defending the state in the struggle against its enemies, that he regarded acceptance in the ranks of the Oprichnina as a mark of his great confidence and favour, that he measured the services of individual Oprichniks by their degree of usefulness to the state, and, lastly, that the evidence of treachery felt everywhere, in the country and at the front, had become for the Tsar an extremely painful matter, which both disturbed and irritated him to the utmost degree.

If we accept this opinion of the investigator, the Tsar's severity towards Gryaznoy when in Crimean captivity will become intelligible. Ivan Grozny was proud of the institution he had devised and his wrath burst out whenever he found blunders, neglect, or abuse on the part of his subordinates. For the historian, the opinion of the initiator and director of the Oprichnina is, of course, inadequate to enable one to make an impartial estimate of this institution. The intention of the organizer is one thing, the motley character of the people who served him is another. It is therefore very interesting to hear the evidence of foreigners who served in the Oprichnina, the more so that they were living examples of the crowd of adventurers that hung around the Court of Ivan IV.



The *Memoirs of Muscovy* by two Germans, the Westphalian Staden and the Pomeranian Schlichting, belong to the category of "foreigners' narratives," but they differ very sharply from those other memoirs and descriptions that come within this category by Herberstein, Chancellor, Fletcher, Possevino, and others. The latter were written by men who had come on official missions for short periods. Their observations could not be other than superficial, the more so that they were closely watched, and much was carefully concealed from them. The former, however, were written by men who had lived in the Moscow State for long periods (Staden lived in Russia for twelve years, from 1564 to 1576, and during this period he served for six years in the Oprichnina). They were right in the thick of events, watched things unobserved, freely mixed in

the most intimate circles of high society, close to the Court and the Tsar's person, and at the same time mixed with wide circles of the people. Unfortunately, the advantages which these secret witnesses of events and customs enjoyed are converted in their writings almost entirely into handicaps, and their evidence, therefore loses a great deal of its value. Both were men of low character; they were ungrateful and were destitute of honour and conscience. Having acquired by force and fraud much wealth in Moscow, having been not only witnesses of but also participants in the horrors and crimes they described, they entertained for the people and the sovereign who gave them asylum no other sentiments than those of contempt and hatred.

After safely slipping out of the country they wrote malicious lampoons about Muscovy and its Tsar, each with a definite object, and in conformity with definite instructions. When, in 1570, Pope Pius V thought of sending Portico, his Polish Nuncio, to Moscow to conduct negotiations with the object of bringing about a reconciliation between Moscow and Poland, Sigismund II, who was afraid that friendship inimical to the interests of Poland might spring up between Moscow and the Papal Curia, instructed Schlichting, the fugitive from Moscow, to write a tract exposing the crimes of the "Moscow tyrant." This document the king handed to the Nuncio to present to the Vatican, where it made a very powerful impression. As a result, Portico received the following instructions from the Pope: "We have made ourselves familiar with what you have communicated to us about the Moscow State; don't take any more trouble and stop the preparations. Even if the King of Poland himself now approved of our journey to Moscow and facilitated it, even then we would not enter into intercourse with such barbarians and savages."

Staden too, like Schlichting, wrote an indictment against the Moscow Tsar, with this difference, however, that being a man of greater and more independent mind, he set out to achieve an object of his own by means of a grandiose plan. His bulky manuscript is divided into three parts, the most important being a project for the military occupation of Moscow which he, a fugitive, in 1578, decided to present to the Hapsburg Emperor Rudolf II through the

medium of the Pfalzgraf Georg Hans. The other two parts, containing "a description of the country and administration of the Muscovites" and Staden's autobiography, constitute, as it were, appendices to this military-political plan. They were intended as a means of throwing light on the weak point of Moscow's policy and of proving that its system of government, which, the author alleged, was based on naked violence and the plunder of the subjects, was unsound.

Both authors, never calling Ivan IV Tsar, but applying to him only his previous title of Grand Prince, tried to rouse the public opinion of Western Europe against him and to incite the rulers to fight the eastern "infidels." The denunciations of Schlichting and Staden fully achieved their purpose. They contributed a great deal to create Ivan IV's unfavourable reputation in diplomacy, politics and literature in the West. In passing, their "revelations" cast a shadow upon the entire Russian people. As a result of their malicious descriptions, the Muscovites were reputed to be ignoramuses whom anybody could deceive and lead by the nose, a savage mob, with proclivities for plunder and violence.

Here the similarity between the two authors ceases. The difference between them is much more marked, and the value of their testimony varies in proportion to the difference in their personal qualities and talents, their conduct and the scope of their activities. The difference in their careers begins with the fact that Schlichting found himself in Moscow not by his own choice, but as a prisoner of war after the fall of the Lithuanian Fortress of Ozerisliche in 1564, whereas Staden, deliberately following the fortune of war, left the Polish for the Russian service after the capture of Polotsk by Ivan Grozny.

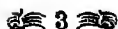
In Moscow Schlichting, who knew Russian and Latin, occupied the post of servant and interpreter to the Court physician Albert, whom he erroneously calls an Italian, whereas he was actually a Belgian. In this obscure position he remained during the whole of the seven years (1564-1571) that he lived in the Moscow State. He describes himself as a soldier. His own aristocratic origin causes him heartily to sympathize with the boyars, whom Ivan Grozny was persecuting. His world outlook was very primitive. In his opinion

the fury of the "tyrant" and of his Oprichniki were due to the bad nature of the Russians. "The Muscovites suffer from a sort of innate ill will, as a result of which it has become a habit of theirs mutually to denounce and slander each other to the tyrant, and to burn with hatred against one another, so that they kill each other by mutual slander. The tyrant loves all this, and there is nothing that he listens to more eagerly than informers and slanderers, not caring whether they speak falsely or truly, as long as they provide an opportunity to put people to death, although many of them never even thought of committing the crimes that were attributed to them."

Schlichting's narrative lacks historical consecutiveness; it lacks chronology. He devoted all his efforts to the piling up of the largest possible number of revolting scenes of cruelty and torture with which the "bloody despot" and his myrmidons were supposed to have amused themselves. The headings of his narrative are characteristic: "A Brief Narrative of the Character and Cruel Administration of the Moscow Tyrant Vasilyevich"; "Torzhok and Tver"; "His Tyranny Over Women"; "The Tyrant an Interpreter of Dreams"; "Tyranny Over the Boyars"; "The Tyrant's Presentiment or Foreboding." He gives us no motives for the widespread and endless atrocities; he merely provides us with monotonous material for a crime novel.

That Schlichting's narrative contains numerous crude exaggerations and sheer inventions is clear from the following: The celebrated geographer and publicist Guagnini reproduced Schlichting's stories in his *Description of All the Lands of Muscovy*. Guagnini toned down these stories considerably, nevertheless, he was sharply criticized by his compatriot, the Italian merchant Tedaldi: "Of the facts so derogatory to Muscovy described by the Veronian Guagnini, who is still alive, he [Tedaldi] had neither seen nor heard anything when he was in Muscovy, and this he pointed out to the aforesaid writer at the time."

With all its faults, however, Schlichting's narrative contains a certain amount of important factual information which cannot be altogether ignored. The most important is his testimony concerning the plot of 1567.



Of quite a different character is the work of Heinrich Staden, which may boldly be called a first-class document of the history of Muscovy and of the Moscow State of the sixties and seventies of the sixteenth century. It is necessary, however, to adapt oneself to the study of this peculiar monument to the past, in which profound observation, wit and striking and vivid descriptions are interwoven with the author's cynical admissions of his own mean conduct. In general, this German, Staden, creates the awful impression of a person gifted with brilliant talents and at the same time obviously vicious and criminal.

To what class of society did he belong? The fact that his parents were burghers in an obscure provincial town tells us little. His career was very wide and varied. Of more importance is his own characterization of that section of the vagrant soldiery which he joined early in life when obliged to leave his country to escape punishment for some crime he had committed. In his plan for the conquest of Muscovy he says: "For this a preliminary sum will be needed of 100,000 thalers. And the soldiers must be equipped so that when they arrive in the country [of the Grand Prince] they may be able to serve as horsemen. They must be soldiers *who have left nothing in Christendom, neither hearth nor home*. There are many such in Christendom. I have seen multitudes of such vagrant soldiers, enough to conquer more than one country. If the Grand Prince had in his country all the vagrant soldiers that are wandering through Christendom—*many of whom are thieves, for which some are hanged*—he would be able to seize all the surrounding rulerless countries whose thrones are vacant and take possession of them." (Italics in this fragment mine.—R.W.)

Perhaps Heinrich Staden was one of the most brilliant of the "vagrants," but he was not a great man; his goal was never higher than "thieving, for which some are hanged."

Indeed, what amazing talent Staden revealed, and to what miserable and revolting objects he employs it! After wandering



*The southwest entrance to St. Basil's Church in the Red Square, Moscow*



through the homesteads of Livonia and serving in the ranks of the volunteers of the Polish Commandant of Fellin, Polubinsky. he, a lad of twenty-two, decides to flee "in fear of the gallows," as he himself puts it. Posing as a pod-dyak, or clerk, and displaying brazen effrontery he, from the frontier, sent Mikhail Morozov, the Russian Lieutenant-Governor in Dorpat, a letter in which he wrote: "If the Grand Prince offers me good pay, I shall be ready to serve him, if not I shall go to Sweden. I must receive a reply forthwith." The Lieutenant-Governor was impressed by this insolent epistle, and believing that this foreigner was a military expert, of which the country was in great need, he sent a mounted escort to him with the following message: "The Grand Prince will give you all you ask for."

At his first appearance Staden charmed Morozov. The latter urged him to remain in Livonia, as he was familiar with men and affairs in that country; but Staden, screwing his price up still higher, demanded an audience with the Moscow sovereign himself, and Morozov immediately dispatched him post-haste to the capital. He covered the distance of 200 Prussian miles (1,400 kilometres) in six days. On his arrival in Moscow he was presented at the Posolski Prikaz (Department for Foreign Affairs). "Dyak Andrei Vasilyevich questioned me about various affairs and my answers were at once written down for the Grand Prince," writes Staden. "Immediately afterwards I was given a note, or memorandum, with which I could demand and receive at the inn every day one and a half vedros of mead and four dengas as food money. I was also presented with a silken gown, cloth for garments, and also a gold piece.

"On the Grand Prince's return to Moscow I was presented to him as he passed from the church to his Palace. The Grand Prince smiled and said: 'Eat bread,' which was an invitation to his table. Then I was given a note, or memorandum, to the Pomyesni Prikaz [Estates Department] and I received the village of Tesmino with all the hamlets attached to it.... Thus I entered on a great career. The Grand Prince knew me and I knew him. I then commenced my studies; I already knew Russian fairly well."



His ingratiating manners and ability to cut a figure in society opened for Staden the doors of the houses of all the influential people at Court and in the administration, and this proved exceedingly useful to him in the various dangerous situations in which he found himself in subsequent periods of his career. He revealed other talents too. His keen observation of life around him enabled him to become familiar with Moscow customs and with the habits and customs of the rural districts, and this is reflected in his wonderful descriptions of Moscow of the 'sixties, of the relations between the manor owners and their peasants (incidentally he mentions the custom of St. George's Day),<sup>51</sup> of legal rod tape, and so forth. He was an astonishingly able descriptive writer. Extremely interesting are his observations on economic life, his tables of market prices, and his keen understanding of the jewel and fur trades. He fully appreciated the commercial and strategical importance of Pomorye. But if we were to ask to what use these observations of the geographer, ethnographer, military expert, farmer, financier and author were put, the answer would put the author of these *Memoirs* in a very unfavourable light. They were used exclusively for the purpose of intrigue, blackmail, the seizure of other people's estates, crude gain, speculation, usury, cheating and eliminating neighbours and rivals, the acquisition of others' booty and the bribery of judges. After annexing several other estates to his own, Staden opened a number of taverns, taking advantage, in this case, of the privilege enjoyed by foreigners, for Russian manor owners were strictly forbidden to distill spirits. From these taverns Staden obtained enormous revenues. He always possessed unlimited supplies of gold and valuables.

There were many who envied Staden. Among these were Germans serving in the Oprichnina. In this connection we learn something of interest about the internal life of the German colony in Moscow. The sons of Germany had not the slightest conception of companionship, or of a common fatherland. Two Livonians, Taube and Kruse, had a Polish orientation (secretly, of course, ready to betray Moscow at any moment), while two others, Staden and Conrad Elferfeld, had an imperial orientation, i.e., dreamed

of going over to the Hapsburgs. But the latter, too, cordially hated each other. In the purely medieval feuds between them, which was accompanied by cheating, the bribing of servants, raids on each other's estates, and constant litigation, Staden was victorious because he always poured handfuls of gold and precious stones into the palms of the judges. Elferfeld, whom Staden had flung into prison, lost heart, confessed his crimes and humbly prayed that all his property be sold and that he be granted only enough to maintain himself in prison. "I refused his request," says Staden bluntly and cynically in concluding his narrative of this episode.

We have no evidence of Staden having fulfilled a single important military or administrative mission during the whole period he served in the Oprichnina. On the other hand, confident of his immunity as a privileged member of the Guards, he participated in the most "valiant" escapades into which the Oprichniki entered on their own private account. He himself tells us about this in connection with Ivan IV's campaign against Novgorod. "Here I began to take unto myself servants of various kinds, particularly those who were naked and barefooted," (*i. e.*, ragged vagrants) he writes, "I clothed them. They were mightily pleased. Later I undertook campaigns of my own and led my men back into the interior by another road. For this my men remained faithful to me. Every time they took a captive they questioned him honestly where—in monasteries, churches or hostels—it was possible to obtain money and valuables, and particularly good horses. If the captive refused to answer voluntarily they tortured him until he did. In this way they obtained money and valuables for me."

During one of these robber raids the following incident occurred: "From the windows of the women's apartments stones came showering down upon us. Calling my servant Teshata I quickly ran up the stairs with an axe in my hand. At the top of the stairs I was met by the Princess who wanted to throw herself at my feet, but terrified by my frightful appearance she rushed back into her chamber. I struck her in the back with my axe and she dropped on the threshold. I stepped over her dead body and made familiar with her maidservants."

After the burning of Moscow in 1571, which the troops of the Oprichnina failed to prevent, and the second raid by Devlet-Ghirai in 1572, which was repulsed by the Zemshchina voyevodas, the Tsar's confidence in the Oprichnina was shaken. A new "sorting out of men," as Ivan Grozny called it, was undertaken, *i.e.*, a revision of the army service lists, and, in connection with it, the confiscation of the manors of the banished Oprichniki and the reinstatement of the former patrimony owners who had been banished on the institution of the Oprichnina. Staden was not included in any of the new lists and was deprived of all his possessions; but thanks to his resourcefulness, he escaped direct proscription. He abandoned all his Moscow affairs and undertakings and went to live in the North. First he built a flour mill in Rybnaya Sloboda (Rybinsk) and later, planning "how to get out of this country" he went further North to Pomorye where he engaged in the fur trade. His escape was facilitated by his connections with powerful people, his histrionic talents, and his experience in commercial affairs. "I was well acquainted with David Kondin, who collects tribute from Lapland," he writes. "When I arrived there I stated that I was waiting for a merchant who owed me a sum of money. Here I met some Dutchmen. I posed as a wealthy merchant and acted as a middleman between the Dutch, the English, the Bergeners from Norway, and the Russians."

In 1576 he boarded, at Kola, a Dutch ship that was carrying 500 centners of stone cannon balls for the Dutch insurgents who were fighting against Spain. He himself carried a large cargo of furs which he profitably disposed of at the Leipzig Fair in partnership with a Russian merchant. He had no intention of leaving Russia for good and all.

A man of inexhaustible imagination, he invented ever new methods of returning to Muscovy. His first plan was to enter the service of Moscow's enemy, Sweden. "I undertook my journey to the Swedish King," he wrote, "and begged him for leave to go to the aforesaid Pomorye to collect my debt from the Grand Prince." But in addition to calculations of reaching a peaceful settlement with the Moscow government he accepted a commission from the

king's brother, Duke Charles of Södermanland, to learn whether there were any Russian merchants in Holland whose ships the Duke could intercept with his pirate ships on the way to the Baltic. Searching for the Swedish Prince in Germany, Staden came across his kinsman Pfalzgraf Georg Hans, a landless prince of the empire, a homeless adventurer who was dreaming of building a German fleet, similar to the Swedish, for the purpose of fighting the "infidel Muscovites." Staden greatly roused the Pfalzgraf's interest by his tales about Muscovy. The two adventurers played their cards exceedingly well. First, through the Pfalzgraf, and then in person Staden, submitted to the Emperor Rudolf II nothing more nor less than a plan for the conquest of the Moscow State from the North by rounding Norway, landing troops at Kola and Onega, and then marching through Pomorye, which Staden had so thoroughly explored in the preceding years (1573-1576). We shall say more about this plan later.

This plan affords fresh proof of Staden's amazing ingenuity, and of his thorough geographical and strategical explorations and knowledge. It provided for a new diplomatic combination, *i.e.*, an alliance between the German Empire, which was to provide a large mercenary force, and the Kings of Sweden and Poland, with the object of establishing the emperor's sovereignty over Muscovy. Ivan IV was to be taken prisoner, carried off to Germany and there held under strict surveillance.

Such is the personality of this werewolf, who combined amazing talent with the most pettifogging and despicable conduct. The historian, however, while not forgetting the disreputable character of this German Oprichnik, must retain in his memory the opinion about Ivan Grozny that was expressed by this man, one of the shrewdest of his contemporaries. Notwithstanding his animosity towards the Tsar, Staden makes the following, if involuntarily, confession concerning the greatness of Ivan IV: "Although the Almighty God has punished the land of Russia in a manner so cruel and heavy that it is beyond description, the present Grand Prince has, nevertheless, succeeded in bringing it about that all over the land of Russia, all over his realm, there is one faith and

one system of weights and measures! He alone governs! All that which he commands is carried out, and all that which he forbids really remains forbidden. No one gainsays him, neither the clergy nor the laity. How long this government will last, only the Almighty God knows!"

#### 4

Although Staden's and Schlichting's lurid accounts of Ivan Grozny's ruthless and often senseless cruelty made a powerful impression upon their contemporaries, their own evidence convinces the present-day historian that these accounts were groundless. The facts they quote explain the "reign of terror" of the critical period of 1568-1572 and show that the dangers surrounding the person and the affairs of the Tsar were even greater and the political atmosphere still more impregnated with treachery than had seemed to be the case from earlier known sources hostile to the Moscow Tsar.

Ivan Grozny cannot be accused of being oversuspicious. On the contrary, his failing was that he imposed too much confidence in the Guard and the administration he had formed, and was not sufficiently consistent in his struggle against the danger which threatened him from the side of the conservative and reactionary opposition, which, far from exaggerating, he, if anything, underrated.

Two facts, which are extremely important for an understanding of the political moods prevailing in Moscow at the end of the 'sixties and beginning of the 'seventies, stand out before us with sufficient clarity: 1) the great plot that was hatched at the end of 1567 by the Moscow boyars and the Novgorod clergy against the life of Ivan IV; and 2) the campaign of conquest launched by the Crimean Khan, Devlet-Ghirai, the object of which was more far-reaching than that of an adventurous, predatory raid by Tatar horsemen, which might or might not have succeeded. Behind the Crimean Khan stood the Sultan of Turkey who planned to occupy Russia from the South

The materials of the investigation of the plot of 1567 were lost, probably not without the participation of the boyars who sympathized with the beheaded plotters; nor were they preserved in the traditional annals, which carefully hushed up this episode, for it put the opposition in an extremely unfavourable light. On the other hand, the government too tried to conceal the plot from the foreign diplomats and European public opinion so that it might not damage the Tsar's prestige.

Only scattered references to this case are found in the works of foreign historians, Polish and Livonian. These are now confirmed by Staden's narrative and Schlichting's hints, although these authors are guilty of vagueness and error.

Staden informs us of the following: "... [Chelyadnin] was summoned to Moscow; [here] in Moscow he was killed and his body was thrown into a dung pit, near the rivulet Neglinnaya. And the Grand Prince and his Oprichniki went all over the country and set fire to all the patrimonies belonging to the aforesaid Ivan Petrovich. ...

"Great distress did they cause all over the land! And many of them [Oprichniki?] were secretly killed. The patience of the Zemshchina gave out! They began to take counsel together to elect as Grand Prince, Prince Volodimir Andreyevich, to whose daughter Duke Magnus was married, and to kill and exterminate the Grand Prince and his Oprichniki. *The agreement was already signed.*" (My italics.—*R.W.*)

"The first [boyars] and Zemshchina Princes were the following: Prince Volodimir Andreyevich, Prince Ivan Dmitrievich Bel-ski,<sup>55</sup> Mikita Romanovich,<sup>56</sup> the Metropolitan Philip and his bishops—of Kazan and Astrakhan, Ryazan, Vladimir, Vologda, Rostov [and] Suzdal, Tver, Polotsk, Novgorod, Nizhni-Novgorod, Pskov and Dorpat in Livonia. Evidently they intended to place a bishop in Riga. ... With the Grand Prince in the Oprichnina were, speaking briefly: Prince Afanasi Vyazemsky,<sup>57</sup> Maluta Skuratov,<sup>58</sup> Alexei Basmanov<sup>59</sup> and his son Fedor. The Grand Prince went off on an important mission; he knew nothing about this plot and marched to Porkhov, on the Lithuanian frontier. His plan was a-

follows: to seize Vilna in Lithuania and, if that failed, Riga in Livonia....

"Prince Volodimir Andreyevich revealed the plot to the Grand Prince and all that which the Zemshchina had designed and prepared. The Grand Prince then let it be known that he had no intention of going to Lithuania, or to Riga, but that he had gone to 'cool himself,' and to inspect the patrimonies of his ancestors. He returned by coach to Alexandrova Sloboda and commanded that a list be drawn up of Zemshchina boyars whom he intended to kill and exterminate at the very first executions.... And the Grand Prince continued: he commanded that the boyars be brought to him, one after another, and he killed them as he thought fit—one one way, another a different way.

"The Metropolitan Philip could no longer remain silent because of that ... and thanks to these utterances the good Metropolitan fell into disfavour and was kept in irons, very heavy chains, until his death....

"Then the Grand Prince departed from Alexandrova Sloboda with all his Oprichniki. All the towns, highroads and monasteries from the Sloboda to Livonia were occupied by pickets of Oprichniki on the pretext that it was a precaution against the plague, so that no town or monastery knew anything about what was going on in the other."

Here we have an extremely eloquent picture. Civil war was brewing in the country; the rebel Moscow aristocracy, led by princely families and supported by the higher clergy, came out at the head of the Zemshchina. "The good Metropolitan Philip" knew everything, and was, perhaps, an accomplice in the plot.

What a characteristic contrast between the imposing list of Zemshchina plotters and the insignificant group of Oprichniki protecting the Tsar!

Nevertheless, Staden's narrative contains a number of half-spoken thoughts, inaccuracies, and a very important omission. He tells us about the assassination of Fedorov-Chelyadnin, but fails to give any motives, and the story has no connection with the plot which he proceeds to describe later on. From foreign sources, how-

ever, it is evident that this extremely wealthy owner of patrimonies with a large number of vassals and servants at his command, was the *ringleader of the plot*, and was assassinated on the plot being exposed by the pusillanimous Vladimir Andreyevich Staritsky. The main thing, however, is that Staden says nothing about the fact that the Polish King, Sigismund II, had arranged with the Moscow boyars through a certain Kozlov for the delivery of the Tsar into his hands. As soon as Ivan Grozny heard of the plot he hastened home; and Sigismund was obliged to dismiss his troops, which were standing in Radoszkowice.

At this point Staden's narrative may be supplemented by that of Schlichting, who knew about the plot arranged between the Polish King and the Moscow boyars, but refrained from mentioning it in order to keep history consistent with his description of the opposition boyars as "innocent victims of a demented tyrant." Nevertheless, at one point of his narrative he unexpectedly observes: "Had not the Polish King returned from Radoszkowice, and had he not stopped fighting, the life and power of the tyrant would have come to an end, because all his subjects [*i.e.*, "the plotters"—*R.W.*] were greatly devoted to the Polish King."

Finally, one more addition must be made to Staden's narrative. The party of the Moscow boyars, the clergy and government officials had supporters in the ranks of the higher clergy, government officials and merchants in Novgorod and Pskov, towns situated on the Lithuanian frontier nearest to the theatre of war. From the accidentally preserved *Perepishnaya Kniga*, or Census Book, of the Posolski Prikaz (Department of Foreign Affairs) we learn the following: "A pillar, and on it the report of the investigations of the *treason* [*my italics—R.W.*] case of 78 [1570] referring to Pimen, Bishop of Novgorod, and to the Novgorod dyaks and pod-dyaks, and to the merchants, and secretaries of the crown, to the sons of the boyars and pod-dyaks, to the effect that they, together with the boyars Alexei Basmanov, and his son Fedor, and the Treasurer Mikita Funikov, and the Printer Ivan, and Ivan Viskovati, and Semen Vasilye-



vich, son of Yakov, and also the Dyak Vasilii Stepanov, son of Yakov, and Prince Ofanasi Vyuzemsky, in Moscow, conspired to surrender Great Novgorod and Pskov, and that Archbishop Pimen conspired with them to surrender Novgorod and Pskov to the Lithuanian King...."

At the last moment the aristocratic plotters took fright and began to betray one another. By means of a trick Vladimir Andreyevich succeeded in obtaining possession of the list of plotters from Chelyadnin and took it to the Tsar, but this new act of treachery failed to save him. The investigation disclosed a treasonable plot of wide dimensions. After this, is there any ground for talking about Ivan Grozny's caprices, and for the jibe that, prompted by cowardly fear, he came down upon the "peaceful inhabitants" of Novgorod with a whole corps of Oprichniks? Of course, he was obliged to exercise the greatest caution, for the matter at issue was a treasonable plot that gravely menaced the Moscow State, the biggest plot hatched throughout his reign. Amidst what conditions was this plot hatched? Amidst the conditions of a most arduous war which put the utmost strain on the military and financial resources of the state, and for which the people had to be roused to the highest pitch of patriotic fervour.

Those present-day historians who, in unison with the reactionary opposition of the sixteenth century, harp on Ivan Grozny's senseless fury in 1568-1572, should stop to think how unpatriotic and opposed to the state the upper classes, *i.e.*, a considerable section of the boyars, clergy and the government officials, were at that time. The plot against the life of the Tsar was most closely connected with the plot to surrender to the enemy not only the newly-conquered territories, but also ancient Russian lands, large tracts of territory, and the most valuable treasures of the Moscow State. The issue was one of internal sedition, of foreign intervention, and of the partition of a great state.

The fight against treason, the hotbeds of which were situated mainly on the northwestern borders, lasted for three years,



IVAN GROZNY

*Fresco in the Sviyazhsk Monastery. Latter half of the XVI century*



from 1568 to 1570. Barely had Ivan Grozny rid himself of this danger than another frightful blow was struck at him from the South by the Crimean Tatars, and here too one can, and should, suspect treachery. The Crimean Khan acted in concert with Sigismund. This was known in Moscow by the supporters of Polish intervention, of whom there were still quite a number in spite of the executions of the preceding three years. They had "overlooked" the approach of the Tatars, and had been unable, or rather unwilling, to organize the defence of the capital.

### § 5

Staden relates some interesting facts about Devlet-Ghirai's raids in 1571 and 1572, which compel us to examine more closely the Crimean episode which cut right across the middle of the great Livonian War.

First of all a subjective motive advanced in Staden's narrative deserves attention. Nowhere does he refer to Ivan Grozny as Tsar, but persists in calling the sovereign of Muscovy "Grand Prince." This is the incivility of the pamphleteer emphasized by his consistent reference to the Crimean Khan as "Tsar." In this case, however, the author's tendentiousness, prompted by his desire to degrade the one and exalt the other, renders us a useful service. It helps us to appraise the balance of forces between the belligerents. If subsequent generations, right down to our days, were inclined to regard the ruler of Muscovy as a real sovereign and the Crimean Khan as a representative of robber hordes, Staden corrects this by depicting the two rivals as of equal dignity, equally conscious of their royal power as "emperors" as it were. In the light of this, the facts he quotes about Devlet-Ghirai's personality and policy acquire exceptional interest.

The latter was a ruler out of the ordinary, and his "raids" were not merely robber incursions. He had far-reaching plans *for the conquest of the entire Moscow State.*

Staden relates facts about Devlet-Ghirai's campaigns of 1571 and 1572 which are not to be found in the works of other

contemporary writers, and which depict the Crimean Khan's undertakings as the arming of the entire Tatar world against Moscow with the support of the Sultan of Turkey.

Extremely important is the fact that in the conquest of Kazan and Astrakhan in 1552-1556, the Tatars were by no means subjugated. In 1571 "the peoples of both Kingdoms rose and went to the land of the Grand Prince, set fire to many undefended towns and took away with them an immense number of Russian captives, not counting those who were put to death. It is believed that they succeeded in doing this only because the Crimean Khan had burnt the Grand Prince's Moscow." The Nogai Tatars, who joined Devlet-Ghirai in the same year, were so numerous and strong, that they demanded an equal share of the booty obtained in Moscow.

Devlet-Ghirai regarded the burning of Moscow during the first raid only as a prelude to another attack on a larger scale. Concerning the Khan's further intentions and calculations, Staden relates the following:

During the campaign of 1572 "the towns and provinces of the land of Russia were already listed and divided among the Mirzas who were with the Crimean Tsar; [it was decided] which territories each was to hold. With the Crimean Tsar there were a number of distinguished Turks who were to supervise all this; they had been sent by the Turkish Sultan [Kaiser] at the request of the Crimean Tsar. The Crimean Tsar had boasted to the Turkish Sultan that he would capture the entire land of Russia in the course of a year, would carry away the Grand Prince a captive to the Crimen, and that he and his Mirzas would occupy the land of Russia." In his new dominion, which was to include restored Kazan and Astrakhan, Devlet-Ghirai intended to organize a new trading system. "He granted his merchants and many others a charter authorizing them to travel with their merchandise to Kazan and Astrakhan, and to trade there duty-free for *he was Tsar and Lord of All the Russias*" (my italics—*R.W.* In the German original we find the words: "Kaiser und Herr über ganz Russland.")

In the campaign of 1572, the troops which were guarding the approaches to Moscow were only a hair's breadth from destruction. Concerning this Staden tells us a very dramatic story. "The Crimean Tsar stood opposite us on the other bank of the Oka. Divai-Mirza, the Crimean Tsar's Commander-in-Chief, crossed the river with a large force, at a great distance from us, so that all the fortifications proved useless. He approached us in the rear, from Serpukhov. Here the fun started. It lasted fourteen days and nights. One voyevoda after another fought the Khan's troops without interruption. If the Russians had not had their moving town [mobile forts mounted on wheels and drawn by horses—*R.W.*] the Crimean Tsar would have defeated us, would have captured us all, and would have led us bound to the Crimea, and the land of Russia would have become his."

The situation, however, remained extremely critical. By a happy chance, Divai-Mirza himself was taken prisoner. His bearing was proud and arrogant, reflecting the confidence with which the Tatar leaders of that time were imbued concerning their superiority over the Russians. On being brought to the Commander-in-Chief's headquarters he "audaciously and insolently said to Prince Mikhail Vorotynsky, and to all the voyevodas: 'Ekh, you boors! How dare you miserable wretches contend against your Lord, the Crimean Tsar? If the Crimean Tsar were taken captive instead of me, I would have liberated him, and I would have driven all [you] boors as captives to the Crimea! I would have starved you to death in your moving town in five or six days.' He was well aware that the Russians had slaughtered and eaten their horses on which they were to have ridden against the enemy. The Russians then became dispirited."

In the end, as is known, Prince Vorotynsky repulsed Devlet-Ghirai's attacks on the Oka and thereby interrupted the Tatar Khan's campaign, which had commenced under such happy auspices; but this victory could not have eliminated the Crimean danger had it not been for the great, unexpected complications which set in in the beginning of the 'seventies. In 1571 Don Juan of Austria, at the head of the Spanish-Venetian fleet, destroyed

the Turkish fleet at Lepanto. The Turks were compelled to guard their West-African possessions and defend their position in the Mediterranean. Consequently, they were unable to support the Crimcan Khan's undertakings in the East; and without their assistance and guidance the Eastern-Moslem world was incapable of conducting an organized assault on Muscovy.

Staden provides us with material which helps us properly to appraise the importance of the events that filled the period of 1571-1572, the period of the Crimean menacc. To the data contained in his narrative we shall add a fact already previously known, *viz.*, that the Kabardian Prince Temryuk, the Tsar's father-in-law, father of Tsarina Maria Temryukovna who died in 1569, went over to the side of the Crimean Khan. Evidently this occurred at the time when the international position of the Moscow State was shaken and its allies and vassals began to desert it.

This explains the rise of a new wave of panic in Moscow, of a new wave of treason trials, banishments and executions. It also explains the mysterious death of Mikhail Temryukovich, brother of Tsarina Maria, who at one time was held in great favour by Ivan IV.



The publication of the Memoirs of Muscovy of the two foreigners Staden and Schlichting marked the beginning of the publication of hitherto unknown documents and of new, extremely important, researches, which deepened our knowledge of the history of the State of Moscow of the sixteenth century.

Among these are the works of scientists such as S. B. Vesselsky, B. D. Grekov, I. I. Polosin and P. A. Sadikov. In this brief essay I shall mention only the most important of the data and conclusions contained in the works of the above-mentioned researchers, which throw light on the more obscure periods of the reign of Ivan Grozny, *viz.*, the end of the sixties and beginning of the seventies of the sixteenth century.

In his work *The Synodic of Banishments by Tsar Ivan as a Historical Source*, S. B. Vesselovsky has given us a most valuable research into the history of the internal conditions of the Moscow State in the middle of the sixteenth century. There passes before us a motley procession of government servants of all ranks, from princely families to common sons of boyars and representatives of still more humble ranks. We learn the careers of numerous persons who participated in the campaigns and administrations of the 'fifties, 'sixties and beginning of the 'seventies, and who fell under Tsar Ivan IV's displeasure in one way or another. To the names mentioned in the lists of the Synodic which Ivan IV circulated among the monasteries towards the end of his reign, the researcher has added the names of those mentioned in Kurbski's *Narratives*, in Schlichting's *Memoirs*, in the annals, and in the books of the Prikazes. Then he performed a great work of genealogical research and dug up from wherever possible information about the service records of many who were executed or assassinated, and about their kinsmen, and ascertained the fate of a very large number of military servants of the Moscow State from the beginning of the sixteenth century to the middle of the seventies. Thus, in S. B. Vesselovsky's researches on the Synodics we have a new document, which is included in the scientific handbook of collected data on the history of the military and civil administration of the Moscow State.

On the question which particularly interests us at the present moment, namely, the scope of the punishments and executions during the period of 1565-1572, and the motives which prompted the reprisals, the researcher provides us with very valuable information.

In his work we find the following excerpts from the so-called Alexandro-Nevsky Annals, in the story of the institution of the Oprichnina: "In the same winter 1565, in the month of February, the Tsar and Grand Prince ordered the execution for *great, treasonable* [my italics—R.W.] deeds, the Boyar Prince Alexander Borisovich Gorbatov and his son, Prince Peter and



also Okolnichi [officer of the Court] Peter Petrov, son of Golovin, also Prince Ivan, son of Prince Ivan Suklov-Kashin, and also Prince Dmitri, son of Prince Andrei Shevyrev." The charge of "treason" typical of a whole series of cases, strictly speaking applies to all persons concerning whom the researcher was able to find motives for arrest, execution or assassination.

Among those accused in the "treason case" of Pimen, Archbishop of Novgorod and others, was the famous diplomat Ivan Mikhailovich Viskovati. According to Schlichting, the Dyak Shchelkalov, who succeeded Viskovati in the Posolski Prikaz accused him of "perfidy and deception," quoting as proof his secret correspondence with the Polish King, the Turkish Sultan and the Crimean Khan. Whereas in Viskovati's case the charge was based on suspicion and, perhaps, on the evidence of informers, the following is a case of a person accused of treason who was caught red-handed. According to the already mentioned Schlichting, Prince Gorinsky was caught on his way to Lithuania and was impaled. Together with him perished about fifty other persons. They were hanged. Evidently they were the Prince's retinue of servants and hinds.

Further on in these researches on the Synodics we find references to a number of men of prominence and merit who were executed either for attempts to flee, or for the flight of their kinsmen.

To the same category of complicity in flights, or preparation for such, belong all those persons, and their number is fairly large, who had gone bail for the noble Princes Mstislavskys, Pronskys, Prozorovskys<sup>60</sup> and others who had broken their vows "to serve the Moscow Tsar faithfully and well."

It is quite natural that administrators of military transport convicted of taking bribes should be found among the lists of traitors. Schlichting tells us: "On returning from Velikie Luki the tyrant commanded his assassins in the Oprichnina to hack to pieces the Chancellor Kazarin Dubrovsky. The assassins forced their way into the latter's house and hacked him to pieces as he was sitting quite fearlessly with his two sons; they

killed him and his sons and threw the pieces of corpses into a well near the house. The motive for this fierce and wicked assassination was nothing more nor less than the accusation levelled by the baggagemen and carters that Kazarin usually accepted presents, and also that he had arranged that the carting of cannon should fall to the lot of the Grand Prince's carters and not to those of the military or of the Counts." Here S. B. Vesselovsky disproves the authenticity of the statements made by that seeker of horrors Schlichting. The executioners found Kazarin Dubrovsky, who was charged with committing abuses in connection with military transports, not peacefully seated at the table with his family, but at the head of his armed servants and kinsmen who had come to his aid and offered resistance to the Oprichniks. The investigator who studied the Synodic considered that Dubrovsky was guilty of offences far more heinous than that of committing abuses in the transportation of cannon.

Was not flight to Lithuania, individually and in entire groups, not only by ordinary government servants accused of committing crimes, but of high-placed commanders and administrators, and this during a war, the most heinous state crime which Ivan Grozny was obliged to combat? Was it not a gaping wound in the body politic, a catastrophe, to which the Tsar reacted by banishments and executions, by ever new "sorting out of men," by dismissing some of his servants and taking others into favour?

There may have been cases of excess, of hunting after imaginary traitors; there may have been the personal intrigues of rivals, as for example in the case of Viskovati who, evidently, was squeezed out of his post by his rival Shchelkalov, who at once acted as his accuser.

On the other hand it must be admitted that in his struggle against treason, Ivan Grozny underrated the danger which threatened him and failed to pick out the real traitors in his entourage. He did not suspect how many men he still had in his service of the type of Staden, in whose head was maturing

not only the idea of flight abroad, but far wider plans of foreign intervention, of a coalition attack on Muscovy, for the execution of which he was secretly collecting the necessary information.

### THE 7th

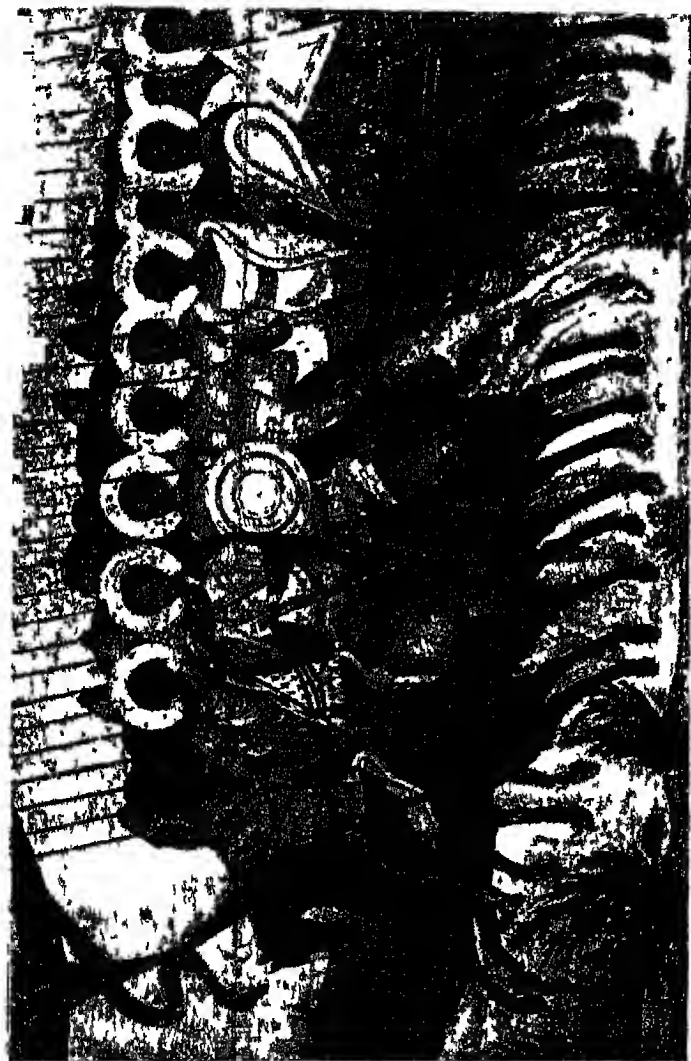
In addition to most glaring cases of actual treason there were other cases of secret and undetectable desertion from state service, of the shirking of duty to the country and the people. We obtain a striking picture of one of the forms of this "internal flight" in S. B. Vesselovsky's essay on *Monasterial Landownership in Moscow Rus in the Latter Half of the Sixteenth Century*.

The investigator examined 657 cases of donations to large monasteries made in the Zamoskovni region in the period from 1552 to 1590. These donations took the form of gifts of patrimonial and manorial lands by men in the military service. Most of these gifts consisted of estates of medium size ranging from 200 to 500 dessiatins. (450 to 1,240 acres.) Appended to this analysis we have a skilfully drafted diagram showing that the curve of monasterial acquisitions rose exceedingly in the period 1569-1578, reaching its peak in 1571.

What motives can be ascribed to the flight of landowning government servants to seek the protection of the monasteries?

Some of these may have been religious. The gift of property, movable or immovable, was one of the terms on which the monks undertook to pray for the peace of departed souls, and often gifts of land were made for the burial of the donor and the members of his family. During the period of banishments and executions the sudden turn of fate among government servants may have increased the necessity of making provisions for burial places within monastery walls, and also for the long journey beyond the grave.

The chief motive for this feverish haste and zeal in making gifts of land to the monasteries were of a practical character, however.



RUSSIAN WARRIORS IN THE CAMPAIGN AGAINST KAZAN  
*Part of the icon "The Church Militant" Middle of the XVI century*



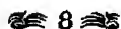
Ruined landowners, or such patrimony owners as were in danger of losing their possessions, sought the protection of the richest, privileged monasteries, which enjoyed right of sanctuary, and by transferring part of their property to the monasteries, tried to save the rest.

In a considerable number of cases these gifts were semi-sales; the monastery gave the donor "change" in the form of money, which was often used for the settlement for the donor's debts, for providing dowries for his daughters, and so forth. In many cases the donor made it a condition of his gift that he should enjoy the use of the donated land for himself and his family during their lifetime.

*The case of the extremely rich Boyar Ivan Petrovich Fedorov-Chelyadnin, the ringleader of the plot of 1567, is noteworthy. Long before the disaster, taking into account the growing distrust and enmity of the Tsar towards him, he distributed a considerable part of his patrimonies among the big monasteries with the obvious object of maintaining some connection with large shares of his properties scattered in different parts of the country. True, he failed to achieve his object. In a fit of passion Ivan Grozny confiscated all Chelyadnin's domains after the latter was assassinated, but he restored part of the confiscated property to the dead man's family five years later.*

The motives which prompted the landowning government servants to donate lands to the monasteries varied, but from the point of view of the interests of the state, these transactions were unpatriotic, for they represented attempts to remove the land from the state's control, which meant a diminution of the country's military and financial resources for defence. The possessions of the monasteries, which thanks to their privileged position played only a small part in the military organization, grew at the expense of the possessions of the military serving class.

During the period of the ruinous foreign wars there was an increase in the wealth of the parasitic section of society, under whose wing those whose duty it was to perform military service sought refuge.



Among those executed for treason, and for other reasons, there were many Oprichniks, and prominent ones at that. According to Staden, Ivan Grozny vented his wrath upon recent favourites and took back into favour those whom he had disgraced. In the *Memoirs of Muscovy* it is related that: "The Grand Prince set about punishing the high officials of the Oprichnina. Prince Afanasi Vyazemsky died in iron chains in Gorodetsky Possad, Alexei [Basmanov] and his son [Fedor], with whom the Grand Prince lived dissolutely, were killed, Maluta Skuiatov was killed near Weissenstein in Livonia; he was the cock in the poultry yard! By command of the Grand Prince his soul is prayed for in the churches to this day. Prince Mikhail son [of Temrynk], from the land of Circassia, the Grand Prince's brother-in-law, was hacked to pieces with axes and halberds by the Streltsi. Prince Vasili Tionkin was drowned. Ivan Zobaty was killed. Peter the Suisse [perhaps Shchenniatev?] was hanged on his own gateposts.... Prince Andrei Ovtsyn was hanged on the premises of the Oprichnina, in Arbat Street; a live sheep was hung beside him. Marshalk Bulat wanted to betroth his sister to the Grand Prince but was killed, and his sister was violated by five hundred Streltsi. Kuraka Unkovski, the Chief of the Streltsi, was killed and his body was thrown into the river through a hole in the ice...."

After describing the burning of Moscow in 1571, when the headquarters of the Oprichnina were burnt out, Staden goes on to say: "This put an end to the Oprichnina, and nobody dared to mention it on pain of the following punishment: [the culprit] was stripped bare to the waist and whipped with a knout. The Oprichniks were obliged to return their patrimonies to the Zemshchina servicemen. And all the Zemshchina servicemen who had survived received their patrimonies, which had been plundered and devastated by the Oprichniks."

Those historians who regard the Oprichnina as a product of Ivan Grozny's caprice accept Staden's estimation literally.

They believe that the Tsar's fondness for the Oprichnina, his beloved child, was shaken at the end of 1570 by the Novgorod affair, when the treason of some very prominent Oprichniki was discovered; that his dissatisfaction with the Oprichnina increased after the invasion of the Crimean Khan in 1571, which the Oprichnina army was unable to repulse. They arrive at the conclusion that the Tsar was not only disappointed with the Oprichnina, but repented of having formed it, and that after its most hated features had been eliminated he replaced it, in 1572, by a new and entirely different institution known as the "Dvor," or Court.

Can we accept the findings of scholars who express such emphatic views and thereby discredit firstly the reform of 1565, which divided the state into an Oprichnina and Zemshchina, and secondly, Ivan Grozny's policy as a whole, which they depict as sudden, convulsive impulses under the influence of "white-hot anger," and similar motives?

The whole thing depends upon what is meant by "Oprichnina." If by this term is meant the unbridled outrages of the Oprichniki, then, undoubtedly, this was abolished in 1570-1572. Men like that slick foreigner, brigand and speculator Staden, no longer found room in the service of the "royal appanage." Wholesale dismissals took place, and this new "re-sorting of men" produced results different from that of 1565. But the entire change was nothing more than a change of personnel. No reform, either strategical, administrative or agrarian, took place in 1572. The institution formed in 1565, which was a further development of the military reform of 1550, continued to exist after 1572, and continued to develop the reforms formerly introduced.

This continuity of development has been excellently demonstrated by P. A. Sadikov in his essay on *"The Moscow Priказы—'Chetverty' During the Period of the Oprichnina."*

While the historians of the nineteenth century, copying the representatives of the princely and boyar opposition, dilated on the lawless plunder of the whole of the Zamoskovni region by Ivan Grozny and his Oprichniki, present-day historians



counter these unsupported assertions by documentary proof that all the time the administration of the Oprichnina was working out a very carefully thought-out financial and agrarian system. P. A. Sadikov very highly appraises the *constructive* work that was conducted within the area of the Oprichnina. On this point he says: "Driven like a wedge into the territory of Muscovy, the 'royal appanage' was to serve, according to Ivan Grozny's plans, not only as a weapon in the determined struggle against the feudal princes and boyars by reshuffling their landed estates, but also as a corps for the creation and organization of means for waging an earnest struggle against foreign enemies."

Ivan Grozny set up a special department for himself, in which he zealously engaged in financial administration necessary for the successful conduct of war, and began methodically, step by step, to build up a state economy.

From the rich contents of this investigation I shall take the liberty of quoting one detail, which may be regarded as P. A. Sadikov's fortunate discovery. We learn that the division of the entire country into an Oprichnina and a Zemshchina was preceded by a careful economic and geographical survey undertaken by the Tsar himself. "Beginning with 1563 Ivan carefully studied the life and customs of the provinces. In May of that year he toured Obolensk, Kaluga, Peremyshl, Odoiev-Sary, Belyev, Kozelsk and Vorotynsk—all the old 'appanage' homes of the Princes Odoievskys, Obolenskys, Belyevskys,<sup>61</sup> Vorotynskys, Peremyshlskys and Kozelskys.<sup>62</sup> In these provinces Ivan Grozny personally inspected the 'great patrimonies' of the Princes and his own royal villages. In the autumn of that year, from September 21 to November 1, he was the guest of Prince Vladimir Andreyevich in Mozhaishk and Staritsa and made a tour of the Prince's villages. Together with the Prince he then visited his other patrimonies, Vereya and Vyshgorod, and here also he inspected the Prince's villages." On returning to Moscow the Tsar at once "bought out" from Vladimir Andreyevich the town and uyezd of Vyshgorod and several volosts in the Mozhaishk uyezd which had particularly pleased him. "In the following year, on

May 7, the Tsar again, with his family, went 'to Troitsa'<sup>63</sup>... during this 'tour,' which lasted until June 9, he also visited Pereyaslavl, 'his villages in Sloboda, in Ozeretsk, also the new villages in Mozhaïsk and in the Mozhaïsk uyezd, and the Krugov villages in the Vyazma uyezd, in Vereya and Vyshgorod.' Finally, in the autumn of 1564, Ivan Grozny resided for a long time in Suzdal, which he left 'in haste' on receiving the alarming news of a Tatar raid on Ryazan."

Summing up these tours P. A. Sadikov says: "When, subsequently, the political situation at home and abroad made it necessary hastily to assign new territory for the maintenance of the 'Oprichnina' force that was being formed, all the localities that Ivan Grozny had inspected in 1563-1564 were the first to be included in the 'royal appanage.'"

In these words our contemporary Russian historian inscribes a most interesting page in the life of Ivan Grozny which reveals him as a farsighted military-technical organizer.

Only a few Russian historians regarded the publications of Staden's and Schlichting's Memoirs of Muscovy as new material for the condemnation of Ivan Grozny as a hysterical, capricious tyrant, and the Oprichnina as a system of terrorism and plunder of the greater part of the state.

Most scholars reacted to these old accusations, which came to the surface only three and a half centuries later, by making new investigations, which proved the *reformatory*, constructive character of the institutions which for seven years (1565-1572) were known as the Oprichnina, and which were not in the least interrupted in 1572, when only a change of names was effected.

In 1570-1572 the personnel of the "royal appanage" established in 1565 was purged, and in this connection the term Oprichnina, which had become unpopular, was dropped. The struggle against internal enemies proved successful, and, as a consequence, executions and banishments subsided. The area of the "royal appanage" established in 1565 subsequently expanded and its administration grew, because the difficulties of the foreign war had increased.

P. A. Sadikov in his essays "A Page from the History of the Oprichnina of the Sixteenth Century" (1940), and "*The Moscow Priказы—'Chetverty' During the Period of the Oprichnina.*" and I. I. Polosin in his work: *What Was the Oprichnina?* (1942) have demonstrated this evolution. In the opinion of these investigators, the establishment of the "royal appanage" did not mean the isolation of the Tsar's estates from the rest of the state, but the special assignment of the most important group of lands in the state for the purpose of enabling the head of the state to develop new, more flexible and wider forms of administration and to employ new methods of organizing the military and financial system without being hindered by the traditional methods of administration. According to the reformer's plans, the system which was being worked out in the "royal appanage" was to serve as a model and a school for the Zemshchina, which could be drawn into the new state economy only by this roundabout way.

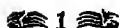




## IVAN GROZNY'S DIPLOMACY

In one of his letters to the Queen of England, Sigismund II, who regarded himself as an expert in diplomatic affairs, refers to the danger of the penetration into Muscovy of engineers, cannon, and technical information. "It is clear," he wrote, "that we have been able to vanquish the Tsar up to now only because he has been ignorant of the art of war and of diplomatic methods and ruses."

These words reveal a profound ignorance of Muscovy and a wrong view of her standard of culture. Although, owing to the difficulties of communication with Western Europe, the Moscow State lagged behind the latter in technical inventions, it far excelled it in its harmonious and mighty military-administrative organization and skilful, carefully thought-out and consistent diplomacy. This was the effect of the peculiar culture of the Great Russian people, which, as comrade J. V. Stalin expressed it, was disciplined "by the requirements of self-defence," and was fostered by the traditions of Byzantine scholarship, which was zealously studied in Moscow.



EUROPEAN observers were fond of mocking at the obsolete, naively "Oriental" forms of ceremony in vogue in Muscovy. Herberstein, for example, describes a meeting between foreign ambassadors and the representatives of Muscovy during which the latter's greatest concern was not to bow before the others did and thereby lower the dignity of their sovereign. It must not be forgotten, however, that in the West, too, symbolical contests in etiquette were held to be important for quite a long time. As late as 1697, during the conclusion of peace between Louis XIV and the Austro-English coalition, all the ambassadors simultaneously rushed at the bridge leading to Ryswick Castle from all sides so that they should not, by being even a moment late, admit defeat and thereby lower the dignity of their respective countries and governments.

At first sight, the table of rank, which divided the powers into those equal and those inferior to the Moscow State, might appear to be an example of Muscovy's "Oriental" or "Byzantine" whims. A very strict distinction was made in Moscow between those whom the Tsar could permit to call him "brother" and those who could not be granted that honour. In the middle of the sixteenth century these "brothers of the Tsar" were the Turkish Sultan, the German Emperor, the Polish King and the Crimean Khan. Moscow did not regard the Swedish King equal in status, the more so that after 1523, when the Vasa dynasty<sup>81</sup> was established, there was no real monarchy in Sweden according to Moscow's conception of the term, but only an "incumbency," *i.e.*, regency. When any new power came within the orbit of Moscow's relations a very careful examination was made of the given case and the power of the foreign sovereign and degree of his dignity was carefully assessed. In the reign of Vasili III an embassy came from Baber<sup>82</sup> in India, and Moscow could not decide to greet the Sultan of that distant land as "brother sovereign" because it was not known whether he was a real sovereign, or only an "uryadnik," or official.

We would be wrong, however, in regarding all these distinctions merely as the captiousness of the Moscow State: virtually, they are the parallel of the concepts that prevailed at international congresses in the nineteenth century by which countries were divided into first-class and second-class powers. Moscow of the sixteenth century merely noted this difference by means of the peculiar terminology of the times. At all events, the Moscow diplomats did not feel at all abashed in the presence of their European confrères. On the contrary, they were fond of assuming the role of critics of foreign powers, of overwhelming foreign diplomats in Moscow with citations from treaties and references to historical events, and, adopting a bantering tone, of catching them out in contradictions.

Characteristic in this respect are the speeches and utterances of Viskovati, the dyak-printer (the Chancellor, as foreigners called him) who gained wide popularity abroad. Russow, the compiler of the Livonian Chronicle, who generally speaking was very hostile to the Russians, said regarding him: "Ivan Mikhailovich Viskovati is a most excellent man, whose equal was not found in Moscow at that time. His wisdom and skill, as a Muscovite who had never had any learning, greatly amazed the foreign ambassadors." In 1559 Viskovati read the following homily to the Danish Embassy, which had submitted to Moscow a number of proposals concerning the affairs of the Livonian Order: Denmark should not have accepted the complaints of the Livonians for they were the subjects of the Moscow Tsar. In appealing to foreign states the Livonians acted like unfaithful servants who steal their master's property at night and sell it to another. The Moscow sovereigns, he went on to say, were not accustomed to yield any lands they had subjugated to anyone. They were ready to conclude an alliance, but not to sacrifice their acquisitions in the process.

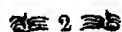
No less pointed was the answer given by the Moscow boyars to the Lithuanian ambassadors in 1562. They linked the theory of the unity of the land of Russia and the right of the Moscow sovereigns to the whole land with the doctrine of unlimited

power. "It is enough to remember the days of old," they said, "when the Lithuanian Hetmans placed the Rogvolodoviches, David and Movkold,<sup>66</sup> on the throne of Lithuania and paid tribute to the Grand Prince Mstislav Vladimirovich, son of Monomachus, in Kiev, to understand that not only *all the land of Russia, but also all the land of Lithuania* is the patrimony of our sovereigns; for beginning with the great sovereign Vladimir, who enlightened the land of Russia with holy baptism, to our present great sovereign, our sovereigns have been and are monarchs owing their thrones to no one. But your sovereigns owe their thrones to others. And so, who is more potent, a sovereign by patrimony, or one who has been placed on the throne? Judge for yourselves!" (My italics.—R.W.)

The boyars did not confine themselves to references to the annals concerning the ancient Russian Princes. They advised the Lithuanian ambassadors to peruse the *Lithuanian Chronicles*, and from them quoted very detailed information that did the Lithuanians little honour concerning the squabbles between Jagiello and Witowt,<sup>67</sup> and showing how, in their mutual strife, these princes appealed for the intervention of the Germans.

In the reign of Ivan IV, as was the case during the reign of his grandfather, the founder of the state, Moscow astonished foreign courts by its diplomatic skill, by the unflagging perseverance, power of observation and resourcefulness of its diplomats. Ivan Nepeya, the first ambassador to be sent to England to conclude a treaty, struck the English as a shrewd, adroit and wide awake Russian. A merchant company that was formed after Chancellor's return for the purpose of establishing commercial relations with the newly-discovered region warned its agents who were going to Russia that the Moscow Ambassador was extremely distrustful, and was always on the alert, as he believed that everybody was plotting to cheat him, and, consequently, advised them to be careful in their dealings with him and other Russians, "to enter into definite transactions and draw up written contracts, for they are a subtle people, not always truthful, and believe that other men are like them."

Considerable flexibility and adroitness were displayed by those ambassadors from Moscow who had dealings with the Moslem courts. Such a one was Afanasi Nagoy, who was in the Crimea in the 'sixties, during the height of the Livonian War, when it was so important to curb the fighting spirit of the Tatars who were ready for the sake of a bribe from Lithuania to hurl themselves upon Moscow at one moment, or to join the Sultan's troops in an attack on Astrakhan at another. Such were the Ambassadors who went to Constantinople: Novosiltsev, who in 1571 was sent ostensibly to congratulate Selim II<sup>os</sup> on his accession to the throne and to assure the Sultan that the Moscow Tsar was not persecuting Moslems in his state, but with the real object of restraining the Turks from taking joint action with the Crimean Tatars on the lower Volga; Kuzminsky, Novosiltsev's successor, to whose lot fell the still more difficult mission of proposing to the Sultan friendship and close alliance with the Moscow State with the object of jointly attacking the Caesar of Rome, the Polish Bohemian and French kings and all the "Italic" rulers, *i.e.*, West-European rulers in general.



Ivan IV himself was distinguished in the Moscow school of diplomacy as a first-class talent. He felt entirely in his element in international affairs, and in it he felt superior to all his rivals. No wonder he was so fond of personally entering into diplomatic negotiations, of giving foreign ambassadors extremely lengthy audiences, of overwhelming them with scholarly "references, entering into dispute with them and putting to them difficult or unexpected questions. On these occasions he felt that diplomacy was his natural calling. I would characterize him as one of the greatest diplomats of all times. The greatness of his diplomacy lay not only in his technical skill, but also in the patriotic ideas which inspired him. As regards the direct conduct of foreign policy, even to the extent of coming



out as an orator and controversialist, Ivan IV was unique among the rulers of his time.

Ivan Grozny's political talent was affected by his turbulent, imperious nature, as a consequence of which he easily slipped into haughtiness and arrogance. He could not forego the satisfaction of ridiculing an opponent and of noting any weakness of his by some cruel jibe. Instead of the subtle irony of the ordinary Moscow diplomats he resorted to biting sarcasm. This explains his by no means diplomatic and sometimes tactless sallies against second-class rulers, or those enjoying only limited power.

He expressed "surprise" that Sigismund II should have called the Swedish King "brother." Did he not know that the House of Vasa, which ruled in Sweden, sprang from a water-carrier? Addressing himself directly to King John III, he resorted to every possible argument to belittle the Swedish crown and, incidentally, in one passage he emphasized the following words he had read in a charter granted by Gustavus Vasa, John's father: "To the Archbishop of Upsala, to give my hand for all the Kingdom of Sweden." On this Ivan Grozny made the following comment: "If yours was a perfect Kingdom, your father would not have been on an equal footing with the Archbishop, his counsellors and all the land. Lands are not granted to great sovereigns. Ambassadors come not from your father alone, but from the whole of the Swedish Kingdom, and your father is only the head, like a village elder."

This bantering tone was employed not only in relation to Sweden; Ivan Grozny not infrequently used it in relation to friendly courts. Discerning the limited character of the English monarchy he wrote in the most unceremonious fashion to Queen Elizabeth: "Men are gaining possessions without your knowledge. . . . Merchants ignore the interests of their sovereign and are concerned only with their own commercial profit."

Ivan Grozny's arrogance began to be reflected in official notes addressed to foreign powers as soon as he began to direct foreign policy himself. In the diplomatic correspondence with Denmark his personal appearance at the head of affairs



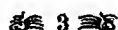
THE BOYARS' DUMA

*Part of the carving in wood in Ivan Grozny's pew in the Church of the Assumption in the Kremlin, Moscow. 1551*



was marked by an astonishing event. Since the time of Ivan III the Moscow sovereigns had called the Danish King their "brother." But suddenly, in 1558, Shuiski and the boyars deemed it necessary to reprove the King of Denmark for having named "such an Orthodox Tsar, the autocrat of All the Russias, brother; previously this had not been the practice." Those who read consecutively the correspondence between Moscow and Denmark will easily find that the Moscow boyars were saying what was palpably untrue. but nobody in Moscow had forgotten anything or had mixed anything up; the Tsar had simply decided to adopt a different tone towards Denmark and to treat her more arrogantly.

But the very same Ivan Grozny could very easily become a charming conversationalist, a benign peacemaker, and a friend of freedom and liberty. and could display wide understanding of the customs and needs of the cities or states with which he had intercourse. In his gifted nature contradictory qualities, sentiments and conceptions existed side by side, or rather, came into violent conflict.



Severe as the crisis of 1570-1571 was for Moscow, Ivan Grozny, far from abandoning the general object of his western policy, did not even relax his pressure. After the rout of Novgorod in the spring of the same year, 1570, he drew up a new and original plan for the conquest of Livonia; he introduced a political innovation.

The fact was that the direct administration of Livonia by Russians, which was accompanied by the appearance of the Orthodox Russian clergy in the country, ran counter to the self-governing habits of the population. One must read the Chronicles of Russow, a contemporary of the Livonian War, to realize to what extent the Moscow customs irritated the inhabitants of Livonia, and how much more they favoured the Swedes

and their indifference to matters of administration. On the other hand, Moscow was obliged to continue the war for the possession of the maritime towns Reval, Riga, and others. Consequently, the freedom of movement of large masses of military had to be assured. To solve this difficulty Ivan Grozny decided to set up Livonia as a separate state, dependent on Moscow, with a king, whose name and origin would serve as a guarantee of the preservation of all liberties.

Taking advantage of his long-standing friendship with Denmark, the Tsar established in Livonia as a vassal ("goldovnik" in the Moscow terminology) the Danish Prince Magnus.<sup>69</sup> With this newly-appointed King a comprehensive treaty was concluded, according to the terms of which Ivan IV retired from the direct administration of Livonia. Magnus, his heirs and all the inhabitants of the country were guaranteed their previous rights and privileges, courts and customs, and also the free practice of Lutheranism. Furthermore, the Livonians were granted the right of unrestricted and duty-free trade with the Moscow State, while they, in their turn, undertook to allow free transit to Moscow for foreign merchants with every kind of merchandise, and also for artists, craftsmen and technicians.

The terms most favourable for the Tsar were the military stipulations. In conformity with the treaty the new Livonian ruler was to help the Tsar to gain possession of Reval and Riga. If these towns refused to recognize Magnus as King voluntarily, the Tsar would compel them to do so. In fulfillment of this promise the Moscow sovereign undertook to maintain all the mobile forces that Magnus would muster for his assistance, and placed the Moscow voyevodas under his command in the event of his waging war in conjunction with the Russians.

Ivan Grozny surrounded his military-political plan with great pomp and circumstance. The proclamation of Magnus as King of Livonia and his betrothal to the Tsar's niece were accompanied by brilliant festivals. To demonstrate his benevolence towards Livonia and her new ruler he released and allowed to return to their homes numerous German prisoners of war who had been

confined in various prisons, or banished to various parts of the interior of Muscovy.

By means of all these measures the Tsar really created a favourable impression. Russow writes: "Very many then rejoiced and exulted in Livonia, being quite convinced that the Muscovite would yield and cede to Magnus all that he had taken in Livonia. Magnus' German entourage regarded him as a most excellent and Christian sovereign, who would lead them to great honours and restore their fatherland to them. Then many throughout Livonia began to look favourably upon Duke Magnus and knew of no better consolation and assistance on earth for Livonia."

Ivan Grozny hastened to make use of this newly-fashioned weapon in the struggle for Livonia. No sooner had Magnus been proclaimed King in Moscow than the Tsar dispatched him with an army of 25,000 men to besiege Reval. Later, as Russow expressed it, "another strong force of Russians who called themselves Oprichniki arrived." Magnus besieged Reval for nearly seven months, battered its walls with Russian heavy artillery, but failed to capture the town, as Swedish ships continued to supply it with provisions and ammunition.

The retreat from Reval failed to daunt Ivan Grozny. In 1571. immediately after the invasion of Devlet-Ghirai, we see him again in Novgorod, ordering his troops to muster in Oreshek near Lake Ladoga, and at Dorpat, in order to wage war against the Swedes in Finland and in Estonia. In the following year (1572) he again, as at Polotsk in 1563, took supreme command of the troops and hurled his best Oprichnik units into battle. It was at this time that Moscow began to recruit mercenaries trained in the European art of warfare.

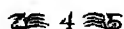
These mercenaries could now be obtained in Livonia where, thanks to the continuous state of war, men who had lost their livelihood and youths who had become unaccustomed to work, willingly took to soldiering. A typical figure of that time was Jürgen Farensbach, or Yury Franzbeck, as the Russians dubbed him. The first commander of the mercenaries whom he himself

had recruited by order of the Tsar. Farenbach was a Livonian nobleman who, although quite a young man, had already seen military service in nearly all the countries of Europe—in Sweden, France, the Netherlands and Austria. He was taken prisoner by the Russians but was restored to liberty and appointed to his new post immediately on his release from prison. He recruited a force of seven thousand Livonian and foreign, so-called *Hofleute* (literally "Courtmen"), and displayed his skill for the first time against the Tatars on the Oka, where, under the command of Vorotynsky,<sup>70</sup> the new attack by Devlet-Ghirai was repulsed.

Concerning Farenbach's success in recruiting mercenaries for Moscow, Russow notes with chagrin: "Never in all ages had it been heard of that Livonians and foreigners should flock to the Muscovite as they did in those years. . . . Good, old Livonians forswore the Muscovite, but many young ones, and also old, went over to his side, in spite of the fact that the Muscovite had unceasingly threatened their fatherland and had publicly stated that he would not leave Livonia in peace until he had uprooted all the weeds, that is to say, all the Livonian noblemen and Germans. In spite of that, many Livonians, in their blindness and ignorance, did their utmost to help the Muscovite to exterminate them as quickly and easily as possible."

Ivan IV's successes in Livonia in 1572-1573 were due to the complete inaction of Poland and Lithuania, where, with the death of Sigismund II, the Jagiello dynasty, which had combined the two states, was to come to an end. In 1571 the Tsar prepared for war against Livonia and rebuilt the Fortress of Taurus, opposite Vilna, which the enemy had destroyed. This was the old and tried method of preparing for a campaign which Ivan III had applied in his campaigns against Narva, Kazan and Polotsk. The death of Sigismund II in 1572 brought up the question of choosing a king. This created a convenient opportunity for the Polish-Lithuanian aristocracy to appeal to Ivan IV to cease hostilities and to hold out the prospect of the

unification of the two states—Polish-Lithuanian and Moscow—under one dynasty. On the other hand, this created for Ivan Grozny the opportunity of developing a big diplomatic campaign with the object of completely annexing Livonia.



Negotiations between Rzecz Pospolita and Moscow were resumed twice: in 1573, on the death of Sigismund, and in 1575, when an interregnum set in again as a consequence of the flight of the French Prince, Henri Valois.

On both occasions the parties in Poland and Lithuania divided very definitely into supporters and opponents of the Moscow Tsar. In favour of him was a large section of the *Szlachta* and also the entire non-*Szlachta* population, particularly the peasantry, as is related by the Venetian Ambassador, a close and shrewd observer. The gravitation towards the Moscow Tsar of the middle and lower classes who took no part in the elections or in the Diets was of no political significance, however. Opposed to the Tsar's candidature was the higher aristocracy, and as they conducted all negotiations, they could easily upset all the hopes and calculations of Ivan IV's supporters.

During the negotiations between the Court of Moscow and the government of the period of the Polish-Lithuanian interregnum Ivan Grozny's diplomatic and oratorical talent shone forth in all its brilliance. He was fond of granting the Lithuanian ambassadors lengthy audiences, during which he delivered long speeches, made interesting confessions, and advanced arguments in justification of his policy.

To Ambassador Voropay, who presented himself to him on the death of Sigismund, he said with great fervour: "You Polish and Lithuanian Pans are now without a head. For although the crowns of Poland and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania are worn by many heads, one good head is lacking, a head which would govern everything, and towards which all of you could flow as streams and rivers flow to the sea.... If your Pans,



being now without a sovereign, want to take me as their sovereign, they will see what a protector and good ruler they will have in me. The heathen power will then not dare to threaten; and not only the heathen power, neither Rome, nor any other kingdom, will be able to withstand you when your lands are united with ours."

Ivan Grozny tried to give a plausible explanation of his recent reverse in the struggle against the Tatars. He expressed fear that Moscow's defeat in 1571 had lowered its prestige abroad: but, he said, this reverse was due to the treachery of the voyevodas. This was a new argument in justification of his severity, which had occasioned so much talk. But this severity was not to be regarded as cruelty, he urged. He was cruel only to those who plotted evil against him. He was well aware from recent examples that traitors were not dealt with lightly even in Lithuania. "If it pleases God that I should become the sovereign of the Polish and the Lithuanian Pans," he continued, "I promise beforehand, both God and them, that I shall preserve all their rights and liberties, and even grant them more as circumstances require. I do not wish to speak of my kindness or cruelty. If the Polish and Lithuanian Pans send their sons to serve me or my children, they will see how cruel and how kind I am."

Incidentally, Ivan Grozny deemed it important to explain to the Polish and Lithuanian Pans his attitude towards Kurb-ski. "I did not intend to execute him," he said; "I only wanted to reduce him in rank, deprive him of office and then pardon him. But he took fright and went to Lithuania." By a skilful turn of phrase he warned the aristocratic government against a personality so unreliable. "Let your Pans remove him from office and see to it that he does not slip away," he said.

In the same speech in which he touched upon so many subjects Ivan Grozny gives the main motive for wishing to occupy the Polish-Lithuanian throne, *viz.*, the firm acquisition of Livonia. "When I shall be your sovereign, Livonia, Mos-

cow, Novgorod and Pskov will be one," he said. Quite suddenly it transpired that in the eyes of the Moscow Tsar Poland was nothing more nor less than a security for the possession of Livonia. "I do not stand for Polotsk, and I am willing to yield it and all its suburbs, and my Moscow suburbs, if only Livonia up to the Dvina is ceded to me. And we shall conclude perpetual peace with Lithuania, and I shall take a vow on my own and my children's behalf that we shall not wage war against Lithuania as long as our House exists."

In Lithuania the Tsar had more supporters than in Poland. Among the Lithuanians there were many who were discontented with the annexation of a considerable amount of land by Poland by virtue of the Lublin Union. On the other hand, union with Moscow promised Lithuania predominance over Poland. Moreover, the opinion prevailed in Lithuania that the Moscow sovereign could provide real and durable protection against the Tatars as well as against the German Empire. The Polish Pans (the Rada) were in no hurry to send ambassadors to Moscow. The Lithuanians, however, in 1573 sent Ambassador Haraburda with a number of proposals. They invited to the throne either Ivan IV himself, or his younger son, Fedor, and on their part requested from the Moscow dynasty an undertaking that their Szlachta rights and liberties would remain intact, and that Smolensk and Polotsk would be ceded to Lithuania.

The Tsar gave Haraburda an answer that was extremely comprehensive, deliberate and precise. First of all he pointed out that it would not be he or his son that would be honoured by being chosen as King, but Lithuania and Poland, if they agreed to make such a choice. "We know that the Emperor and the King of France sent to you, but that is no example for us to follow, because except for us and the Turkish Sultan there is no sovereign of any other state whose House has reigned continuously for two hundred years. For they are begging for honours for themselves, whereas we are sovereigns of a state who have descended from Augustus Cæsar from the beginning of the ages. And this is known to all men."

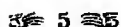
The purpose of this haughty preamble was to put the Lithuanians in the position of petitioners at the very outset, and from this to draw the conclusion that territorial concessions to Lithuania were out of the question. Only after making these statements did Ivan Grozny promise that he would not violate the rights and liberties of the Lithuanians and Poles. But he immediately demanded that his title should be honoured. The full title which Ivan Grozny claimed for himself is extremely interesting: "By the grace of God Sovereign, Tsar and Grand Prince Ivan Vasilyevich of All the Russias, of Kiev, Vladimir and Moscow, Polish King and Grand Prince of Lithuania, and Russian Grand Prince of Great Novgorod, Tsar of Kazan and Tsar of Astrakhan," to be followed by the "Russian, Polish and Lithuanian regions according to seniority." He did not let slip the opportunity to add about the preservation of the rights of his state and of his own power. "Our faith must be honoured, we shall be free to build in our castles, volosts and courts churches of brick and wood; we shall revere our Metropolitans and bishops according to our customs. We must also reach agreement concerning our Courtmen, without whom I cannot go to Poland and Lithuania; of these men there are few." By that time the Oprichnina had already been transformed into a "Court."

Ivan Grozny very definitely announced his object of dissolving the Lublin Union. He himself was prepared to renounce the Polish crown and seek only the Lithuanian, promising Lithuania the restitution of the lands annexed by Poland, except for Kiev, which was to be ceded to Moscow. "We wish to hold the Moscow State and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania as one, as Poland and Lithuania have been," he said. This idea expressed by Ivan IV during a personal audience was confirmed to the Lithuanian Ambassador by the Tsar's confidential agents, Okolnichy Umnoy-Kolychev, the Duma noble Pleshcheyev and the Dyaks Andrei and Vasili Shchelkalov, and they added reassuringly: "Do not fear Poland; His Majesty will reconcile her with Lithuania."

The most important thing of all for Ivan IV was the stipulation that no matter what partitions or vicissitudes may occur, he must be assured of Livonia. He wanted to avoid a personal union, but to achieve a union by the close alliance of the three states; and he was equally willing either to allow his own son to go to Lithuania, or see the emperor's son, *i.e.*, the Austrian Archduke, chosen for the friendly state. During the same visit of the Lithuanian Ambassador extremely diverse combinations were proposed to him, but with all the variations, one thing remained constant, *viz.*, Livonia.

"That formerly our country stretched to the River Berezi-na we shall forego for the sake of the peace of Christendom; but *Polotsk and all its suburbs, and all the lands of Livonia, must be on our side*, must go to the Moscow State, and without these conditions we cannot let our son Fedor go to you as King." As regards perpetual peace, the terms of this are different: "*Polotsk with all its suburbs and Courland go to Lithuania, and Livonia to Moscow. The Dvina shall be the frontier, and the frontier between Polotsk and its suburbs and our lands shall run along the old borders. And let all three states stand as one against all foes. Let the Emperor's son be chosen as King who must stand in brotherhood with us and conclude perpetual peace.*" (My italics.—*R.W.*)

The whole trouble was that Poland, like Moscow, was also reaching towards Livonia, and like Moscow could not dispense with an outlet to the sea. It was on this that the extremely shrewd French agent Montluc, who was watching the interests of Henri Valois, based his calculations. He promised that Henri would build a fleet, by means of which he could most effectively hinder the Narva trade. Then he would put the Cracow Academy in a flourishing condition and supply it with learned men, and at his own expense send one hundred young Szlachta to study the sciences in Paris. It was evident that Poland was as much concerned as Moscow about obtaining technicians from abroad, and also about enabling her youth to acquire knowledge abroad.



The Poles' unfortunate experience with Henri Valois, who fled back to France several months after his election, created a new opportunity for Ivan IV to be chosen for the Polish-Lithuanian throne. In 1575 the Papal Nuncio anxiously reported to Rome that the higher aristocracy alone were opposed to having the Moscow Tsar; the people, however, were well disposed towards him, and the minor aristocracy, Polish and Lithuanian, all wanted the Moscow Tsar in the hope of being liberated from the power of the higher aristocracy if he were chosen.

The election campaign of 1575 proved unsuccessful for Ivan IV, however. Here his great talent was thwarted by his own minor and vexatious faults, his lack of self-restraint, his fondness for biting wit and his contempt for his foes.

From the very outset he offended the political vanity of the aristocracy, who constituted the Supreme Rada. The latter, writing to him concerning Henri's departure, reported simultaneously about the latter's accession to the throne and his "temporary departure" and stated that they, the Pans' Rada, had been instructed to enter into negotiations with foreign sovereigns. Ivan IV replied that Yelchaninov, his envoy, would wait for the king's return, but he would not see the Pans, the members of the Rada. Sovereigns communicate only with sovereigns and Pans with boyars, he wrote. Since the Pans had a King, it was unbecoming for him to communicate with Pans.

Failing to take advantage of the necessary public ceremonies to which the Polish and Lithuanian aristocracy were accustomed, and not saying a word about the privileges he was prepared to grant the upper ruling class which had just received a golden charter of liberties from Henri, Ivan IV even made little effort to win over its individual members secretly. Several of them definitely hinted at this to the Russian Ambassador and even gave him samples of the letters which, in their opinion, the Tsar should address to certain aristocrats whom they named. To the Diet at which the election was to

take place and which met in Warsaw in November 1575, the Tsar failed to send a "big," i.e., plenipotentiary ambassador. The supporters of Moscow, who were impatiently waiting for the Tsar's declaration, were disappointed by his brief, dry and non-committal message.

In the end, Ivan IV, apart from his own blunders, was vanquished by the unexpected formation of an international coalition, which not only opposed his candidature but promoted that of an invincible rival.

The first blow was struck by a new enemy of Moscow, the Swedes, whom the Tsar had held in such contempt. At the meeting of the Diet the Swedish Ambassador at once raised the most acute question of foreign policy, viz., the question of war against Moscow for Livonia. He proposed that the struggle be waged by united forces. If the Poles ceded to the Swedes their part of Livonia, the Swedes would forego the loan they granted Poland. Livonia could be formed into a separate domain to be ruled by the Swedish Crown Prince Sigismund, who was a descendant of the Jagiellons on his mother's side. He then proposed that Princess Anne, the sister of the deceased Sigismund II, be elected to the Polish throne. In his opinion only this would help to settle the Polish-Swedish and Livonian-Moscow affairs. A firm alliance would be concluded with the neighbouring states, peace would be concluded with the Turks, Tatars and Germany, *the Muscovites would be driven out of Livonia, and the Narva trade, which was so injurious to Poland and profitable to Moscow, would cease.*

The Swedes found a peculiar supporter in the person of the Turkish Sultan. Fearing the election to the Polish throne of the son of the Emperor Maximilian, i.e., a representative of the House of Austria, which was hostile to Turkey, the Sultan put forward his own candidate, viz., the Voyevoda Stephen Bathori of Transylvania a vassal of the Turks. Bathori's ambassadors at the Diet were lavish with their promises. They promised to preserve all the liberties of the Pans and Szlachta, to act in accordance with all their wishes, reconquer all

that had been taken by Moscow, for which purpose Bathori would use his own troops, maintain peace with the Turks and Tatars, take personal command of the army, and send 800,000 zlotys to cover war expenditure and to ransom the Szlachta, who had been taken captive in Russian territory during the last Tatar invasion. Later, this candidature coincided with the proposal of the Swedes; Bathori was proposed as the consort of Princess Anne.

This rapprochement between Sweden and Turkey, Poland's northern and southern neighbours, compelled Ivan Grozny to seek an alliance with Austria, which had put forward her claim to the Polish throne and was exceedingly disturbed by the candidature of the Turkish vassal; but this ally was never of any use to Russia. Ivan IV was for the first time to learn all the weak sides of the slow, always belated, inflexible and tactless policy of the Austrians. The "Caesarian" government was unable to find any point of contact with Moscow. They began with petty insults to the Moscow envoy Skobeltsyn when the latter arrived in Vienna. Then the Tsar was irritated by the emperor's ambassadors who came to Moscow. Instead of a reply on the matter concerning Poland they brought only excuses, and the Tsar looked upon them not as genuine ambassadors, but as merchants seeking gain. On one point Austria's proposals coincided with Ivan IV's plans, *viz.*, on the question of partition—that the Polish crown should go to the emperor and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania to the Moscow State. But while the Tsar was interested in this partition mainly because it would have ensured his retention of Livonia, the emperor, unable to forget that that country had once been conquered by the German Knights, proposed that Ivan IV should leave the Baltic countries in peace. To induce him to do so he held out the prospect of his gaining possession of Tsargrad (Constantinople).

The Austrian Ambassador said: "The election of Ernest [the Emperor's son] as King will be very much to your Majesty's advantage. You, Ernest, the Emperor, the King of Spain,

the Pope of Rome and other Christian monarchs will jointly, on land and sea, attack your chief enemy, the Sultan of Turkey, and within a brief space of time will drive the infidels into Asia. Then, by the will of the Emperor, the Pope, the King of Spain, Archduke Ernest, the Imperial Princes and of all the Orders, the entire Greek Eastern Kingdom will be ceded to your Majesty, and your Serene Highness will be proclaimed Tsar of the Orient."

But Ivan IV did not allow himself to be tempted by shadows such as those which tempted the political adventurers who were in power in the sixteenth century. He was extremely dubious about the possibility of an alliance of the Christian states. From the history of the eastern question he recalled, and related to the Austrians with his accustomed irony, the story of Vladislav of Hungary, who at one time had concluded an alliance with the Austrian Caesar and with numerous German sovereigns, but had been deserted by them and betrayed to the Turks, as a consequence of which he perished. To have confidence in such an alliance, the Caesar's promises were not enough. An exchange of opinion among all the sovereigns was needed, and the Tsar mentioned the Danish King, about whom the emperor had forgotten. As for Livonia, he rejected the emperor's proposals.

"The land of Livonia is our patrimony," he said; "the Livonian Germans paid us tribute. The Livonian lands and the *Courlands* [Courland] must all go to our state. We have our goldovnik [vassal] there. So you, our dear brother Emperor Maximilian, do not hinder us in the land of Livonia and thereby show your love for us, for we claim the land of Livonia, and shall do so in future." (My italics.—*R.W.*) He wanted the Poles to choose Ernest, and the Lithuanians himself; but if Lithuania did not wish to part from Poland, he was willing that she should choose Ernest too.

All the evidence goes to show that Ivan IV had cooled towards the idea of occupying the Polish-Lithuanian or even only the Lithuanian throne. He was ready to yield this dangerous post



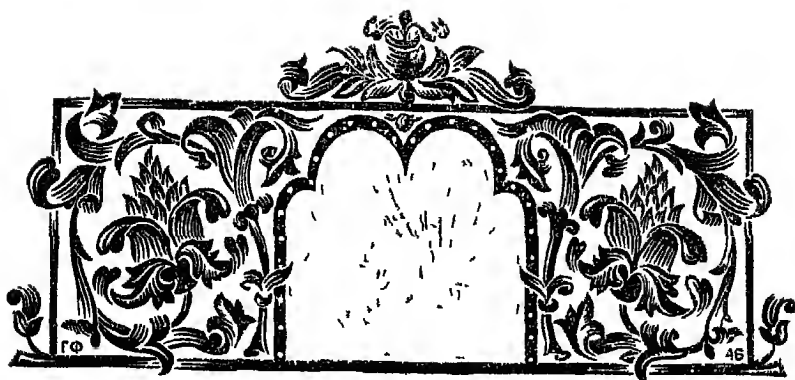
entirely to his new ally. The accession of the Austrian to this throne would help him to retain Livonia the easier.

The big diplomatic campaign of 1573-1576, on which Ivan IV spent so much energy, resourcefulness and oratorical talent, ended in failure. Why did he drop an enterprise when so many chances seemed to be in his favour?

Here very realistic considerations may have operated. To undertake the government of the two Szlachta republics would have meant not only encountering new and enormous difficulties, but also jeopardizing the entire military monarchical system of the Moscow State which he had built up. On the other hand, motives of an entirely different nature may have influenced Ivan Grozny's policy. The war had already lasted for seventeen years and had frightfully devastated the regions adjacent to Livonia. Much damage had also been inflicted by the raids of Swedish soldiery upon the peaceful inhabitants of the Novgorod region. As I. I. Polosin puts it, "to cover the needs of the war, Tsar Ivan did not hesitate to screw up taxation to the utmost and to exact state revenues with the utmost cruelty." This either spread submissive death among the taxpayers, or induced them to flee from the Novgorod region to the North, "to the sea," as far away as possible.

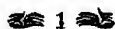
A grave financial and economic crisis was brewing. In this perilous situation it is quite conceivable that Ivan Grozny, without waiting for the failure of his candidature in Lithuania, clutched desperately at a plan for a new war in Livonia as a means of retaining the gates to the sea in one way or another.





## IVAN IV AND STEPHEN BATHORI

The fate of Ivan IV was the tragedy of a warrior who was beaten by circumstances over which he had no control. He threw all his possessions into the scales of fortune, and not only did he lose his newly-acquired territories, but the state, which he had only just built up, was shaken to its foundations. The chief actor in this drama did not die on reaching the summit of success. He lived on with slowly waning strength, surrendering his outposts to a foe who was inferior to him in talent and in the sinews of war.



IN 1575. WITHOUT waiting for the end of the negotiation concerning his election to the Polish-Lithuanian throne, Ivan IV resumed the offensive in Livonia. Again everything was hurled against Reval: again Magnus marched in front. In the winter of 1575-1576 the Russian forces crossed the ice to the Islands of Oesel, Dagö and Moon and captured Hapsal, Pernau and Helmet. In 1576 the Russo-Tatar army approached Reval three times.

These campaigns revealed the enormous reserves the Tsar had at his command. At the beginning of the siege the Russians had 2,000 barrels of gunpowder. They fired at the city as many as 4,000 cannon balls and incendiary shells. After repelling two assaults, the Revalians, in despair, appealed to the German towns for assistance, pleading that their city was the outpost of all the European sovereigns and cities on the Baltic coast. The Russians would come again and again, they urged, and if Reval fell under the power of the Muscovites the whole of Livonia would fall. It was difficult to withstand the onslaught of the fierce foe. Especially after his recent reverses "he was like a savage bear who when wounded is bolder and fiercer than ever."

The election of Bathori and the collapse of the plan to partition the Polish-Lithuanian State between Moscow and the Hapsburgs, prompted Ivan IV to undertake the last and, as it seemed to him, decisive, "great" campaign of 1577. In January that year, 50,000 Russians again appeared before Reval with heavy cannon. In the summer, after elaborate preparations in Novgorod and Pskov, the Tsar himself came out at the head of his troops. This time everything seemed to be in his favour. Even the Crimean Tatars were on his side. While he was attacking the Baltic possessions of Lithuania and Poland they made incursions into Volhynia and Podolia. In Lithuania there were people who were ready to go over to the side of Moscow.

Ivan IV was so confident of success that he now changed his policy towards Magnus. For seven years he had used his "goldovnik" as an intermediary link between the Russian mainland and the Baltic coast. By a new treaty Magnus was given land to the North from the River Aa, while the Tsar retained for himself the region between the Aa and the Dvina. The vassal was drawn into the background to play a secondary role, while the Tsar again came forward as an open conqueror. Dissatisfied with this arrangement, Magnus attempted to act independently and began to capture towns on his own account, but Ivan Grozny wrote to him bluntly: "If you are dissatisfied

with Kess [Venden] and other towns which have been granted you, go to your land of Oesel, and to your Danish land beyond the sea. We have no use for you, and we shall banish you to Kazan. So it were better if you went across the sea, and we, God willing, shall clear our fatherland, the land of Viflandia [Livonia] and guard it."

This was the twentieth year of a hellish, unprecedentedly long war. All methods of winning the good will of the local inhabitants were forgotten. Only one thought remained, that of gaining possession of territory, even with only a few remnants of the population. Before this horrible, devastating incursion, everything wilted, everybody fled in desperate fear. In his first onslaught Prince Trubetskoi's vanguard reached Kreuzburg on the Dvina. Hot on its trail, the Tsar himself captured castle after castle: Marienhausen, Lyutsin, and Rezhitsa. The German mercenaries went over to the side of Moscow. Then Kreuzburg, Sesswegen, Kokenhausen, Venden, the defendants of which blew themselves up in their despair, and Ronneburg were captured. All these fortresses surrendered without offering resistance. Only at Kokenhausen did Radziwill with a small force of cavalry try to offer resistance. Chodkiewicz kept his corps of 4,000 men outside of Livonia, not daring to meet the Tsar's force of 30,000. By the end of 1577 the whole of Livonia, with the exception of Riga, Treiden and Dünamünde, had surrendered to Ivan IV. In a letter to Kurbski written in Wolmar Ivan Grozny described himself as the hereditary ruler of the German-speaking Livonian lands. Moscow's international position left nothing to be desired too. In 1578 Ivan IV concluded treaties with the Crimea, the Austrian Emperor and with Denmark. The latter recognized the Tsar's possession of Livonia and also his right to the future acquisition of Courland.

True, there was a feeling of instability in Ivan Grozny's triumph. He had won his latest victories over weak opponents, particularly Poland, which had fallen into chaos as a result of the long absence of a king (1572-1576). Meanwhile, the Moscow State had reached the last stage of exhaustion. As

impending events revealed, it had scarcely sufficient forces to defend its own territory. In spite of all the successes he had achieved in Livonia, the Tsar dared not cross the Dvina to conquer Courland. He had barely returned to Alexandrova Sloboda and dismissed his troops when the Poles, recovering their boldness, returned to Livonia and began to recapture fortress after fortress.

## 2

In Germany the course of the Livonian War was watched with the closest attention. At the Ratisbon Reichstag, which sat from July to October 1576, the Moscow question, the question as to whether to devise something to counterbalance the frightful conqueror or to enter into an agreement with him, was the subject of the most lively debates. Here, for the first time, came to light the plan for intervention against the Moscow State. It had been mooted by Pfalzgraf Georg Hans, a violent opponent of Moscow, as far back as 1570, when he proposed that a German fleet be built on the Baltic to wreck Russia's oversea trade. Soon after the Ratisbon Reichstag the Pfalzgraf became friendly with Staden and learned of his project to conquer Muscovy from the North. In 1578 Staden personally submitted his project to Emperor Rudolf II (1576-1611). This project is interesting in itself and also as an appraisal of the condition of the Moscow State after twenty years of continuous, exhausting war for Livonia which had absorbed all its strength.

Staden's project is further proof of the profundity of the political and geographical observations and of the wild imagination of this dissolute adventurer. By the irony of fate the head of the shadowy "Holy" Empire, to whom the initiator of the first German colonial expedition appealed, was a supine and indolent dreamer, absorbed in astrological speculations. How did the idea of attacking the Moscow State from the North arise?

In the first half of the sixteenth century Muscovy had to fight on three fronts: the East, South and West. Ivan IV brilliantly solved the eastern problem. In the South he limited himself to defence during the whole period of his reign. In the West he energetically attacked, and expanded and deepened the front. To distract the conqueror's attention from Livonia, Staden thought of creating another front in the North, to strike a blow at the ruler of Moscow on the side that he did not in the least expect. Two main arguments were advanced in favour of this project: one, that it was necessary to forestall the Crimean Khan who, according to Staden, was preparing at an early date to subdue the Moscow State which had been weakened by the Livonian War; the other, that Muscovy was most vulnerable in the North, for here the Moscow ruler had no fortresses, held no garrisons, and did not guard the maritime ports.

Concerning the danger that threatened Muscovy from the Crimea and the relation of forces on all fronts, in general, Staden wrote: "The Crimean Tsar is thirsting to seize the land of Russia so much that I cannot either describe or relate it to your Roman Imperial Majesty in full measure. Particularly because the Turkish Sultan [seated] Stephen Bathori in Poland as King as he had seated him [the Crimean Khan] in the Crimea.... The Crimean King ... with the aid of the Turkish Sultan, who will not withhold his assistance, counts on seizing the land of Russia and on carrying off the Grand Prince with his two sons as bound captives to the Crimea, and on seizing the *grand Treasury which had been accumulated for many hundreds of years* [my italics—R.W.]. From it the Turkish Sultan will be given a monstrously large sum. And the Turkish Sultan has already commanded the Piatigorsk Tatars, who usually fought against Lithuania and Poland... to enter into a truce with Poland, so as to enable the Polish King to attack the Grand Prince's soldiers the more easily.

"The Grand Prince *cannot now hold out in open battle against any of the sovereigns* [my italics—R.W.], and as soon

as he is convinced that the troops of the Polish King are stronger than his own, he will command that everything be burned for several miles along the route, so as to prevent the Polish troops from obtaining either provisions or forage. This is what he does against the troops of the Swedish King. As soon as the troops of the Polish or Swedish King retreat, the troops of the Grand Prince are ready for the march again. They pour into Poland, or Sweden, and burn and rob. Often, when [the Grand Prince] is confident of success, he personally goes to Poland, Livonia and Sweden, there captures one, two, or three castles, a city or two, and soon after returns to Moscow. Now [incidentally] he usually goes not to Moscow, but to Alexandrova Sloboda!"

By exaggerating the strength of Muscovy on the South front and drawing for the emperor the tempting prospect of capturing the incalculable treasures of the Moscow Eldorado, Staden tried to incite the emperor, who was always overburdened with debt and was in financial straits, to launch a campaign on this new front, which he was the first to recommend. Here, too, he promised the discovery of colossal stores of wealth. To achieve success, however, the enemy had to be taken unawares, and, therefore, the project had to be kept strictly secret, for otherwise the Muscovite would learn of the designs against him through his agents at foreign courts and would take measures to thwart them.

Staden's project bore the proud and pompous title: "A Plan for Converting Muscovy into an Imperial Province," and, indeed, he proposed the undertaking of a campaign which was grandiose for those times even for the number of troops required for it.

"To capture, occupy and hold the land" [of the Grand Prince] he wrote, "it is sufficient [to have] two hundred ships well supplied with provisions, two hundred pieces of field cannon or iron mortars, and one hundred thousand men. This large number is required not to fight the enemy, but to occupy and hold the entire country." For this undertaking the Danish

king who, in Staden's opinion, had been badly treated by the Grand Prince during the partition of Livonia, would provide one hundred ships well supplied with provisions and munitions. One hundred ships were to be supplied by the Hanseatic League. Skippers and pilots were to be obtained in Holland.

Staden could not dispense with sentimentality of the purely German brand. He proposed that one of the emperor's brothers should be put in command of the expedition and later "take this country and govern it." "He must not be stern at first," Staden advised. "He should be willing to converse with the poor as well as with the rich, and give each friendly audiences [at all events] until the whole country is occupied. Among the troops there should at first be at least a hundred preachers, who will preach the word of God to the soldiers in the forts and fortified towns. Of such [preachers] a sufficient number may be found in the universities." After this tribute to the hypocrisy of the epoch of religious reformation, came considerations of a purely practical nature.

The recruitment of soldiers and the equipment of the ships were to be completed in the course of one year "so that all may be ready when it is decided to start out from Germany—Hamburg, Bremen or Emden; [the expedition should start out] on April 1. and sail first to the bay and River Kola in Lapland." Staden drew up more detailed instructions concerning the shipment of the expeditionary force across the sea. In addition to the plan which he submitted directly to the emperor, there has been preserved another variant for submission to the ex-ruler of Livonia, the Grand Master of the former Order whose lands in Livonia Pfalzgraf Georg Hans had promised to return in the event of the expedition against Muscovy proving successful. In this document we read that the landing forces, which were to embark at Emden, would be able, after a voyage of two weeks with a favourable wind, to land without hindrance at Kola, Kandalaksha and in the mouth of the Onega. They could then march a long distance and occupy large inhabited centres before the arrival of con-



siderable enemy forces from the centre, for, apart from everything else, the latter would not know where the invading imperial troops would be encountered.

The most difficult problem that confronted the author of this plan was how to finance the expedition from sources within the ramshackle empire, which had neither a definite budget, regular taxes, nor ensured credit. Staden advised that a loan be obtained from the Hanse towns, and that a special tax, to be known as the "Third Pfennig," should be imposed. These measures, however, would produce funds that would suffice only for the initial stage of the expedition, for the transportation of troops, the occupation of the coastal centres and for their fortification. After that the war was to pay for itself. All Staden's calculations were based on the anticipated seizure of vast stores of gold, silver, precious stones and valuable merchandise in the Moscow State itself.

The Germans had an extremely exaggerated idea about the amount of wealth in the form of gold and other valuables said to be hidden in various secret depositories scattered all over Russia. In the above-mentioned letter to the Grand Master of the Livonian Order, Pfalzgraf Georg Hans wrote: "I know from Georg Farensbeck, who served the Muscovite in the ranks of the German horsemen in the war against the Tatars, who knew all his plans, and was familiar with his affairs in even greater detail, which may be revealed if so desired, that in some places *immense treasure* in money and precious stones may be captured if this is kept secret; and one of these depositories alone would be enough to provide the sinews of war for quite a long time."

In Staden's plan we find an excellent description of Pomerania and of its trade routes, along which the Imperial German invading troops were to march. Here Staden, with his keen eye and retentive memory, or perhaps he had taken extensive notes, felt quite at home. He gives precise data concerning the distance between the towns, indicates where bases should be established and the size of the garrisons needed for



CROWNING THE TSAR

*Part of the carving in wood in Ivan Grozny's pew in the Church of the Assumption in the Kremlin, Moscow 1551*



them, where treasure could be captured and where storehouses should be built. "With a force of five hundred men—half of them sailors—the Solovetsky Monastery should be captured," he wrote. "Armed prisoners should be sent to the Empire on the same ships. They must be bound in fetters and imprisoned in castles and towns. They may be allowed out to work, but only in iron fetters filled with lead at the feet. This is because they sell our prisoners to the Turks. So should they be held until the whole country has been captured. What is to be done with them afterwards is explained below."

When three hundred miles of territory along the coast and in the interior along the River Onega had been occupied, a large fortified camp was to be built in Kargopol, at the pass where the rivers which fall into the Volga begin. Commissioners were to be appointed in Pomorye to supervise the shipment of various merchandise into and out of the country so that everything the Commander-in-Chief required could be quickly supplied. "Then it would be possible every year to obtain sufficient reinforcements from Christendom. The Grand Prince, however, will be unable to obtain reinforcements from anywhere, unless he recruits his peasants for war; but unlike the peasants in Christian countries, these peasants possess no arms and know nothing about warfare.

"It will be necessary to proceed further on barges or boats, or by land if you will.... Nobody should be killed except those who are captured with arms in hand. Here only peasants and merchants live. War has never visited these parts before and nobody here is in possession of arms.... To every fort must be attached peasants and merchants—living from ten or twenty miles around—so that they may provide the pay for the troops and supply everything that is needed.... The first thing to be taken from the Russians are their best horses, barges and boats—small vessels—which should be taken to the forts, so that they may be protected by artillery if need be...." Kargopol "must be occupied and manned by a force of three

thousand men. Up to this point the enemy's appearance need not be feared."

Staden insisted very strongly that the common people in Muscovy were unarmed and were unskilled in the art of warfare. For that reason the victory of the imperial invaders seemed to him to be a foregone conclusion. It was only necessary to proceed quickly along the roads indicated in his plan, to fortify the key positions and to capture the treasure depositories, so as to be able to keep the army supplied. *Resistance on the part of the local population was not to be expected.*

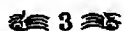
And then Staden exclaims in a sort of ecstasy: "Proceed further and plunder Alexandrova Sloboda, after occupying it with a force of two thousand men! After that plunder the Troitsa Monastery! It must be occupied by a force of one thousand men, half foot and half horse!" He imagined that it would be possible through the medium of a prisoner of war to convince the common Russian soldiers that Ivan IV was a cruel tyrant and to win over the more prominent men in the Russian service to the side of the Germans by suggesting that they should bring the title deeds of their estates. "I am convinced that bloodshed will be unnecessary; the Grand Prince's troops are no longer able to stand open fighting," he wrote.

As the genuine voyevodas of the Grand Prince were all massacred, the Grand Prince himself would soon be captured. And together with him "it is necessary to capture his Treasury: it consists entirely of pure gold, and year after year was multiplied by the efforts of the former Princes; [it must be captured] with all the Grand Prince's crowns, sceptres, vestments and treasures which previous Grand Princes have collected, and with that great Treasury which the present Grand Prince has collected by fair means or foul; [all of it] must be captured and carried to the Holy Roman Empire of the Emperor of Rome Rudolf and placed in his treasury."

The following is the fate of Ivan IV envisaged at the end of the plan: "The Grand Prince and his sons should be pro-

vided with a suitable region in the Empire as their domain," but before that he was to be tormented somewhat, "send him into the mountains where the Rhine or the Elbe have their source. Here, too, all the prisoners from his country should be brought and killed in the presence of himself and his two sons in such a way that they should see the killing with their own eyes. After that the corpses should be tied at the ankles and strung on logs, thirty, forty and even fifty to a log, in short, as many as the log can hold and yet be able to float on the water together with the corpses. Then the logs with the corpses should be pushed into the river and allowed to float downstream."

All Staden's efforts were in vain, however. The recruiting of an army of invasion from among the inhabitants of the shadowy Holy Empire was out of the question. The entire plan was one of the curiosities of the period. But for us, at the present time, it is extremely important, in so far as it shows to what extent the attitude towards the Moscow State had changed. It is only necessary to compare this plan of 1578 with that of 1570, about which we learn from Liebenauer's letter. At that time the Moscow State seemed so powerful that a Muscovite invasion of Germany was feared, and the idea was mooted of averting it by means of an alliance with this formidable power. Eight years later, however, the Moscow State seemed so feeble that a plan for its conquest seemed quite practical.



Concerning 1578 onwards, we have the narrative of the war on the western front by Reinhold Heidenstein, a Polish squire who belonged to the Bathori-Zamoyski party, Zamoyski being Bathori's right-hand man. Heidenstein stands out prominently among our sources of information about the Livonian War. True, he worshipped his hero, was inclined to be dazzled by the brilliance of the Polish *Szlachta*, and hated the Muscovites; but in spite of all this, he was an excellent ob-

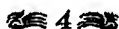
server and gave his enemies their due. Evidently Heidenstein had made himself familiar with the Russian annals and knew the history of Pskov and the fate of the princes and capital towns beginning with Ruric. He knew that Ivan III had laid the foundations of the might of Moscow and that "the present reigning Ivan IV has still further enlarged his extensive dominion *by his good fortune and skill*" (my italics—*R.W.*). He tells us that Ivan IV acquired his vast Kingdoms—Kazan and Astrakhan—by a method that was new at that time, *viz.*, sapping and mining with gunpowder. The Moscow State reached to the borders of Persia. Thanks to the mutual strife among the Livonians, Ivan IV occupied their country and often inflicted defeat upon the Swedes. "The rapidly growing power of the Moscow Tsar began to fill with dread not only the neighbouring peoples, but even those more remote, and his pride with the possession of such extensive frontiers and great successes was so great that he held all other sovereigns in contempt and believed that no other nation could compare with his in wealth and power."

Heidenstein notes the Tsar's unrestricted power and the implicit obedience of his subjects. "The fact that he alone exercises supreme power in all things and that all commands emanate from him alone, that he is free to make any decision and possesses all the means to secure their execution, that he is able to muster the largest force in a short space of time and utilize the property of the citizens as if it were his own in order to assert his authority—all this is of extreme importance for the acquisition of power and the successful conduct of war."

Extremely interesting are Heidenstein's observations concerning Ivan Grozny's popularity in his own country. "Those who study the history of his reign," he writes, "should be all the more surprised that in spite of his cruelty the people should love him so strongly with the love which other sovereigns can acquire only by indulgence and kindness, and that this extraordinary devotion to their sovereign could last so long. *And it must be observed that the people not only do not mur-*

*mur against him, but even during the war displayed incredible staunchness in defending and protecting fortresses; and of deserters there were very few. On the contrary, during this same war there were many who preferred to remain loyal to the Tsar even at great risk to themselves, rather than accept the greatest rewards for treachery."* (All italics mine.—R.W.)

Heidenstein attributes the staunchness and obedience of the Russians to their religious convictions. "They regard as barbarians, or infidels, all those who differ from them in the matter of faith ... according to the rules of their religion; and regarding loyalty to the sovereign as obligatory, as loyalty to God, they exalt the staunchness of those who remain loyal to their oath of allegiance to the Prince to their last, and they say that their souls, on leaving their bodies, go straight to Heaven."



Heidenstein gives us an interesting description of Ivan Grozny's famous opponent, Stephen Bathori, to whom fell the lot of striking a heavy blow at the state that was built up by the two great Ivans. He depicts him as a great soldier, diplomat and administrator whose flexibility enabled him to steer through the difficulties prevailing in the Szlachta republics and whose talents were revealed only in the disturbed period of war when the whole of Europe was a vast market for mercenaries, when it was no longer war that called for soldiers but the war-minded unemployed and unemployable soldiery who created wars and dragged them out endlessly.

Stephen Bathori was one of the leaders of motley mercenary forces beginning with Coligny, Alexander Farnese and Maurice of Orange and ending with Wallenstein; men skilled in the art of warfare, who kept their armies together by belief in their lucky star, but who were actually infinitely ingenious and resourceful. In Bathori's army representatives of nearly all the nations of Europe could be met with. In addi-



tion to the Poles, Lithuanians, Russians and Hungarians whom he recruited in his old and new dominions, Germans, Belgians, Scots, Frenchmen and Italians flocked to his standard. It was extremely difficult to maintain discipline among these loot hunters and adventurers from all the countries of Europe, who virtually constituted organized masses of petty entrepreneurs and traders. At the capture of Polotsk in 1579 the Poles and Hungarians, filled only with avaricious concern to get their share of the loot, lined up in fighting order and rushed at each other. Before the surrender of Velikie Luki in 1580 the Hungarians, who counted on sacking the town if it was stormed, killed the Russian emissaries who came down from the walls of the besieged fortress to sue for terms of surrender.

Bathori's political position was no less difficult. The Szlachta were unwilling either to serve in the army or to pay taxes. The autonomous local Diets were the last place to find anybody who was concerned with the interests of the state. How, under these circumstances, was it possible for the new king to carry out his plans to equip an efficient army and to lead it by rapid marches into the central regions of the Moscow State in order to cut off Livonia and tear her out of the clutches of Ivan Grozny?

Bathori's ingenious plan of forming a standing army of peasants from the royal domains was rejected. Instead of that the Szlachta Diets proposed an utterly useless *Pospolite Ruszenie*, i.e., a general levy, and forced labour instead of money taxes.

The king was not only obliged to haggle with the *walny*, i.e., General Diet, over a tax, but also to tour the different voyevodstvos and conclude separate agreements with the particularly intractable Diets, vainly trying to convince the Szlachta corporations of the regions more remote from the theatre of war that the conquest of Livonia was of general state importance, that an agricultural country must have outlets to the sea, and so forth. Every year the fight with the Diets was resumed and threatened to cause the collapse of the system chosen by

the king. During his expeditions Bathori was constantly harassed by the endless strife among the Pans, who had their own ideas about the way posts under the crown should be distributed. These claims hampered the king much more than the conflicts over precedence which were the peculiar feature of Moscow.

Bathori succeeded in holding on in spite of his precarious position, however. More than that, he skilfully utilized the talents of the Szlachta and induced a large section of them to support the war by holding out to them the prospect of Poland conducting a Great-Power policy. After his death this matter passed into the feeble hands of the incompetent Sigismund III, but all that his incapable successor achieved—the conquest of Smolensk and the Severskaya region, and the temporary occupation of Moscow—was carried out by the forces and personalities which Bathori had collected and inspired. He had a sharp eye for capable men and a charm which attracted them. Bathori's military school produced his inseparable companion, first Chancellor and then Hetman Zamoyski, "conqueror of towns," diplomat and political orator. Another of his pupils was the young Zolkiewski, the rising star of Poland's brief power politics period, who, however, found no real outlet for his versatile talents.

The Szlachta had to be won over by devious ways, by recruiting them in voluntary units, or by hiring them with the private funds of the king and the magnates. These were livery-men, similar to those of the period of the War of the Roses in England. These private forces created new difficulties for the supreme command. During the sacking of Polotsk, quick-tempered Bathori struck a marauding soldier with his sword, but the latter turned out to be a mercenary in the service of Hetman Mielecki, and this important dignitary took umbrage at the king's action in striking one of his men.

Luck played no little part in Bathori's career. This Transylvanian voyevoda ascended the throne of the Jagiellos and took over command in a war which had already lasted twenty

years, at a time when his great opponent had reached the point of utter exhaustion. It may confidently be said that the struggle would have borne an entirely different character had Ivan Grozny and Bathori encountered each other in 1566, at the time of the first Zemski Sobor, when the military monarchy was in its prime, and when the government servants and merchants proclaimed their willingness energetically to continue the war. True, Bathori, a born soldier and a popular commander, was the kind of sovereign and military leader that Peresvetov had ardently dreamed of. On the other hand, Ivan IV's talents as a technician and military administrator equalled Bathori's brilliant talents as a strategist and tactician. Ivan's trouble was that his military strength had waned and his financial resources had touched bottom.

V. Novodvorsky, who has investigated the struggle for Livonia of 1579-1582, attributes Moscow's reverses in the last three years of the war entirely to Ivan IV's state of depression. The Tsar had at his command a large force of three hundred thousand men, but being utterly dismayed, he dared not put it into action. Bathori, with his relatively insignificant forces, was therefore able to make conquest after conquest without hindrance. Novodvorsky is quite right in referring to Ivan Grozny's waning personality, his becoming prematurely aged. He was no longer the man who in the 'fifties and 'sixties displayed such vigour in the pursuit of his military and commercial Great-Power policy. But the impotence, inactivity and loss of faith in his fortune revealed by the Tsar were closely connected with the actual collapse of his cause.

On what grounds Novodvorsky bases his statement that Ivan IV had a vast army at his command we do not know. As far as we are aware Moscow never had a force of three hundred thousand men. After so many expeditions, it must have been difficult at that time to muster a force of even fifty thousand. If Ivan Grozny had even such a force at his command he might not have been able directly to attack Bathori's corps which were engaged in sieges, but, at all events, he could

have made flank diversions in Livonia, at Oisha and Kiev, which would have been extremely dangerous for the Polish King. Evidently he lacked even such a force, and this provides additional grounds for his strange inactivity.

It is very characteristic that Magnus and Farensbach, the leaders of the mercenaries who served Ivan IV, deserted the latter and went over to Bathori. They had an inkling that the Tsar's cause was lost.

### 35

Before his final collision with Bathori, Ivan IV was very contemptuous of his opponent. In 1577 Bathori was engaged in besieging Danzig, which had fallen away from Poland, and could not hinder Ivan Grozny's expedition against Livonia. When the Polish King complained that the Tsar was robbing him of Livonian towns without having declared war, the latter answered that there was no need for the king to worry about Livonia, an old Moscow patrimony, considering that he himself had been taken from the obscure Transylvanian Voyevodstvo only to occupy the Polish throne and the Lithuanian Grand Duchy.

During the negotiations for perpetual peace, Ivan IV presented big demands, including the cession to him of Kiev, Kanyev and Vitebsk. In this connection he advanced a new dynastic theory, *viz.*, that the Lithuanian Gediminoviches<sup>71</sup> sprang from the Rogvolodoviches of Polotsk. "These Princes were great and glorious sovereigns, our brothers, universally known as our brothers by kinship," he said. "Hence, the crown of Poland and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania are our patrimonies, for of that princely House no one is left, and the King's sister [who became Bathori's consort] is not an heiress to the crown." The Lithuanian ambassadors, offended by these disparaging remarks about their new king, referred to the choice of David who was of humble origin. To this Ivan Grozny replied with his customary self-assurance: "One was chosen by God, but the other was chosen by rebellious men."

Heidenstein relates a characteristic episode in the campaign of 1578 in order to depict Ivan Grozny as a sort of Asiatic Xerxes, who could not even conceive of his might ever suffering irreparable damage. All the cannon of the Muscovites had proper names, such as Wolf, Hawk, Serpent, Bear, Maiden and so forth, and all had a falcon embossed upon them. When these personified cannon were captured by the Swedes "the Moscow Tsar immediately ordered new ones to be cast with the same names and symbols, and even in a larger number. To maintain the prestige of his power he deemed it necessary to show that fate could take nothing from him that he could not, with his means, replace in an even greater quantity in a short space of time."

Evidently these methods achieved their object and created the impression that the power of the Moscow Tsar was limitless. A Polish author quotes the opinion the Turkish Minister Mohammed, "the wisest of counsellors of three Oriental sovereigns in succession," expressed to the ambassadors from Bathori: "The King is undertaking a difficult task. Great is the power of the Muscovite, and with the exception of my Master, there is no mightier sovereign on earth."

In the course of his narrative Heidenstein reverts several times to the splendid system of fortresses erected on the Muscovy side along the whole line of the Lithuanian frontier. Exceptionally strong were the fortifications in the zone between the Dvina and the Dnieper, where castles were erected threatening Vitebsk, and Vilna itself. Particularly remarkable was the Castle of Susha, which was erected on Lithuanian territory. These fortresses were surrounded by immense tracts of wilderness and impassable scrub, which the Muscovites allowed to grow so as to hinder the movements of the enemy. All the fortified centres were abundantly supplied with provisions and munitions of war. When Zamoyski captured the Fortress of Velizh in 1580 "provisions, forage, gunpowder and ammunition were found in such huge quantities that not only did they suffice for all our troops, but enough remained for the whole garrison."

Notwithstanding the exceptional difficulties of fighting in this region, Bathori decided to launch his attack precisely at this point. In the first place, he was guided by strategical considerations, *viz.*, to cut Livonia off from Moscow and simultaneously threaten Smolensk, Pskov and Novgorod. The other motive that prompted him was to destroy the fortified wedge which had been thrust into Lithuanian territory and to free the road for commercial caravans which travelled along the main arteries of Lithuania's commercial intercourse, the Dnieper, Dvina, and the nearest of their tributaries.

Bathori struck his first blow at Polotsk, of which Lithuania had been deprived sixteen years before. Ivan Grozny had not anticipated this attack. The Voyevodas Shein and Sheremetyev were sent to the assistance of the fortress, but not daring to encounter Bathori's troops in open battle, they occupied the Fortress of Sokol, near Polotsk, and endeavoured to prevent the transportation of provisions to the enemy. At Polotsk Bathori employed his latest invention, *i.e.*, red-hot cannon balls, which caused fires on the walls and within the precincts of the town. The besieged garrison fought with extraordinary courage for three weeks, during which it repulsed a number of fierce assaults; but in the end it was compelled to surrender when nearly all the (wooden) fortifications of the town were burnt.

The king submitted to the Muscovites the alternative of entering his service or of returning home. According to Heidenstein, most of Ivan Grozny's troops, prompted by love of their homes and loyalty to the Tsar, preferred to return home "although everyone had reason to believe that he was going to certain death or frightful torture. The Tsar, however, spared them, either because he judged that they had had no alternative but to surrender as they had reached the last extreme, or because he himself, dispirited by his reverses, had lost his zest for cruelty."

Everything we hear about Ivan Grozny in this period combines to create a single impression, *viz.*, that the Tsar was greatly depressed and humbled; his former ruthlessness had

vanished. The following is another detail taken from the narrative of the Polish historian. After Polotsk Bathori captured the Fortress of Sokol. At that time the Tsar was in Pskov, not far away, but he did not move a step to go to the assistance of the hard pressed garrison of Sokol. On returning to the interior of his country, he sent to the garrison of Susha, a fortress that was isolated amidst the surging enemy forces, a characteristic message stating that he gave them permission, on their abandoning the fortress, to damage the guns, and particularly the gunpowder and other munitions of war which they could not take away, to bury the icons and sacred vestments so that they should not become objects of the sacrilegious mockery of the infidel, and to save themselves the best way they could, not because he doubted their loyalty, but because he did not wish to subject their gallantry, which he wished to preserve for more important feats, to a hopeless ordeal and the cruelties of the enemy.

In the beginning of 1580 Ivan IV called a convocation of the clergy in Moscow at which he told the assembled hierarchs that innumerable enemies had beset his state, that he and his son, his notables and voyevodas held constant vigil day and night to save the state, and that it was the duty of the clergy to help him in this great task. His forces were dwindling and suffering want, while the monasteries were prospering. Taking advantage of the strife among the clergy, of the envy of the white clergy towards the black, he induced the assembled hierarchs voluntarily to pass an edict abolishing the privileges of the monasteries. The princely and boyar lands which had been purchased by the monasteries were transferred to the Tsar, and the monasteries were prohibited in future from purchasing, taking in mortgage or accepting land in return for "prayers for the peace of souls."

The government took measures against evasion of military service—the first sign of waning discipline. Sons of boyars who were in flight were hunted down by special officials who travelled through all regions. Deserters were flogged and

after preliminary confinement, sent into the Tsar's service to Pskov.

Ivan IV changed his tone also in his diplomatic relations. When Bathori started out on his second campaign in the spring of 1580 the Tsar sent him a message informing him that "humbling himself before God and before the King, he had commanded his ambassadors to go to him" (Bathori). To be able fully to appreciate the significance of this concession on the part of Ivan Grozny it should be remembered that Moscow ambassadors had never been sent to Lithuania before: negotiations with the Polish-Lithuanian State had always been conducted in Moscow.

In all previous negotiations the two sovereigns had been studiously offensive to each other. For example, their ambassadors refrained from enquiring about their—the sovereigns'—health; they did not rise to their feet when the visiting ambassadors conveyed the greetings of their sovereign. For such violations of the rules of etiquette negotiations were broken off. Now, however, Ivan IV gave his ambassadors the following instructions: "If the King does not enquire about the Tsar's health and does not rise when the Tsar's greetings are conveyed, pay no attention to it. If he begins to dishonour, persecute, annoy or scold, enter a mild complaint to the usher, but make no quick retort. Be patient."

As, however, Ivan's ambassadors dropped no hint about the likelihood of concessions, Bathori continued his advance. He ordered his troops to muster in the Fortress of Chashniki where the road branched off to Smolensk and Velikie Luki. To keep the Tsar for as long as possible in a state of uncertainty as to the object of the expedition, Bathori called a council of war in his camp to discuss whether to attack Smolensk, Pskov, or Velikie Luki, although he had decided long before to attack the latter. The Moscow forces had to be broken up, and units were sent to Novgorod, Pskov, Kokenhausen and Smolensk. The stronger units were held in the South, where the Khan was likely to appear.



The same thing happened at Velikie Luki as had already happened at Polotsk. A garrison of six thousand, or seven thousand at the most, had to contend against Bathori's picked force of thirty-five thousand. Ivan IV was unable to send any troops to the city's relief, nor could any assistance be sent from the garrisons of the fortresses in the lake district near Velikie Luki, viz., Nevel, Ozerishche and Zavolochyc. All these forts defended themselves isolatedly, and fell into the enemy's hands one by one.



The situation became more and more critical for Ivan IV. In the winter of 1580-1581 the Polish-Lithuanian troops remained in Muscovy territory. In addition to the towns already captured, they captured Holm and burnt Staraya Russa. Other units, reinforced by those under the command of Magnus, who had now entered the Polish service, were pushing forward in Livonia and devastating the Dorpat region, where the Russian colony had been more firmly established than anywhere else. At the same time the Swedes, under the command of the Frenchman Pontus de La Gardie, began to achieve successes on the coast of the Gulf of Finland. Within a short space of time the Russians lost Kexholm, Padis near Reval, and Wiesenberg. Almost the whole of Estonia fell into the hands of the Swedes.

Bathori began to make preparations for a third and decisive campaign.

At the Diet convened in February 1581 he declared that he could not lay down his arms until he had secured possession of the whole of Livonia and had deprived the Tsar of the opportunity of obtaining all he needed for strengthening his might *via* the Baltic ports. Zamoyiski also addressed the Diet, and hinting at the Russian emblem, he insisted that the enemy should be struck such a blow as would not only cut off his wings and prevent them from growing again but sever his

shoulders from his body. He had to be pushed as far away from the sea as possible. The king criticized the prevailing form of government which compelled him to suspend military operations every time he wanted money in order to obtain the Diet's sanction to collect taxes. After long recriminations the Diet sanctioned the granting of a sum equal to the revenues from taxes two years ahead on the condition that this was to be the last campaign. It declared that the Szlachta were being ruined by taxes and were in great distress.

The spirit that prevailed in the Polish-Lithuanian State was entirely out of keeping with the energy displayed by Bathori and his Staff. Ivan IV took into account all the internal difficulties with which his enemies had to contend. Through his agents he maintained communications with the aristocrats who were hostile to Bathori's party while at the same time he continued to press for negotiations and sent his plenipotentiaries instructions again and again.

It is interesting to note the conflict that went on within him between the skilful, flexible diplomat who could be compliant when circumstances demanded, and the ardent controversialist, whom nothing pleased so much as to hunt his opponent with stinging repartee. He was willing that his ambassadors should not insist upon his title being written out in full, but he instructed them to say: "God gave our sovereign his royal title and who can take it from him? Our sovereigns are not of yesterday's making, they have been sovereigns for ages." But he realized at once that he had gone too far and hastened to prepare the ground for a dignified retreat. "If they ask: Who is a sovereign of yesterday?" he added, "answer: We say that our sovereign is not a sovereign since yesterday. As for the one who is a sovereign since yesterday, he knows that himself!"

The more the Tsar relied on his diplomatic skill the more persistently his plenipotentiaries insisted on the retention of the possessions already lost in two campaigns. In Bathori's camp, near Nevel, the Moscow ambassadors proposed that Livonia

be divided, and that both sovereigns should call themselves sovereigns of Livonia. The negotiations were continued in Warsaw before the eyes of the, as yet, undissolved Diet. Everybody was astonished by the tenacity and shrewdness displayed by the Tsar's ambassadors, who felt so much at ease in alien surroundings. Bathori was adamant, however, and demanded the whole of Livonia, as well as the cession of Sebez and an indemnity of four hundred thousand gold pieces.

"The whole of Livonia" meant the loss of Narva, *i.e.*, the outlet to the sea, the window into Europe. This caused the pent-up wrath of Ivan Grozny to burst forth like a torrent. He sent Bathori the famous message commencing with the words: "We, humble John, Tsar and Grand Prince of All the Russias by the will of God and not by the wishes of much rebellious men." He accused his enemy of being bloodthirsty. "We seek for ways of sparing Christian blood, whereas you seek for ways of making war. Why then should we make peace with you? It will be the same without peace," he wrote. Displaying his scholarship, he compared Bathori with Amalek, Sennacherib and Chosroe's General Sarvar. He maintained that the king's demand for indemnities ran counter to all tradition and international law. He was the Tsar of Livonia, the hereditary sovereign, while Bathori was an upstart, who dared to demand ransom according to the infidel Tatar custom.

Bathori picked up the gauntlet thus thrown down by the Tsar, and in reply to this message he wrote in the provoking style of the time. Calling the Tsar Cain, the Moscow Pharaoh, Herod, Phalaris, a wolf in the sheepfold, a venomous slanderer of another's conscience and a bad guardian of his own, he did not forget to sting Ivan IV with sharp jibes. "Why did you not come against us with your troops, why did you not protect your subjects?" he wrote. "Even a poor hen protects her chicks from the hawk with her wings; but you, a double-headed eagle [for such is your seal] hide yourself." Jeering at Ivan IV's alleged cowardice, he challenged the Tsar to single combat.



The campaign of 1581 was opened by an attack on Pskov, the strongest fortress on the borders of the Moscow State, the ancient bulwark against western enemies, famous for the struggle it waged against the Livonian Order. At the council of war held beneath the walls of the fortress, the king explained to his generals that Pskov was the gate of Livonia. If it was compelled to surrender, the entire country would fall into the hands of the conquerors without further bloodshed.

It looked as though Pskov would be taken by storm, or would surrender under pressure of artillery fire, as was the case with Polotsk and Velikie Luki. But Bathori encountered a number of difficulties. Pskov had a large garrison; the Voyevoda, Prince Ivan Petrovich Shuiski, proved to be a man of exceptional energy. The fortress was well supplied with ammunition, and its huge cannon balls inflicted no little damage upon the besiegers. At the first assault the Hungarians and Poles, Bathori's best troops, caused a breach in the wall and captured two large towers, the Pokrovski and Svinusski, but they were repulsed.

This setback, suffered by the hitherto invincible enemy, created a profound impression on both sides. The besieged began to make sorties and dig mines towards the enemy lines. Shuiski even attempted an assault upon the Polish camp. Bathori and Zamoyiski were therefore obliged to institute a regular siege of the town and thus caused murmuring and insubordination in their motley army. The Lithuanians bluntly stated that they would not remain in the field in the winter and, refusing to obey their commanders, they demanded good winter quarters. Some threatened to return home. Others declared that they would not lift a finger until they had received their pay. The mercenaries loudly declared that they were fighting at the risk of their lives for another's advantage and for a province which neither they nor the state would gain.

The troops were appeased only after the king had prom-

ised to open negotiations at an early date and thus bring hostilities to a speedy conclusion. This moment might have been decisive in favour of Moscow had Ivan Grozny any forces left with which to launch an offensive, but the Tsar had reached the limit of his resources. This was particularly marked when Radziwill, at the head of a flying column, reached Rzhev without hindrance and nearly took the Tsar himself prisoner in his camp at Staritsa.

The defence of Pskov during the five months' siege is an outstanding episode in the history of Russia and of the world. There is no finer example with which to illustrate Russian patriotism in the sixteenth century, the fighting abilities of the Russian people and their heroic defence of their native land. We shall take the liberty of quoting several passages from the extremely vivid sketch drawn by I. I. Polosin in his *The Heroic Defence of Pskov in 1581*.

"An assault was fixed to take place on August 30.... In the fortress there were many fugitives from the surrounding possads, villages and hamlets.... Women and children rose to defend their native city. They carried to their fathers and brothers cannon balls, earth and sifted lime to throw into the eyes of the enemy. The Russians fought the invaders with amazing staunchness and courage.... In the town the sound of axes was heard again; smiths' bellows began to work once more. The Pskovians demolished their wooden houses and erected new gabions, the women and children carrying earth in baskets, buckets, sacks and in their aprons. The enemy was amazed by the speed with which breaches were healed, and by the way the Russians bombarded them with cannon balls and stones all day long!

"Hundreds of people gathered on the shore of Lake Pskov. A formidable force arose, alarmed about the fate of the native land of the Russian people. Husbandmen and fishermen rose. The Poles learned what partisan warfare meant. They watched Lake Pskov with growing alarm.... The waves upon it were as high as on the sea. And also large ships...."



ST. ZOSIMA RETURNS TO THE SOLOVETSKY MONASTERY  
FROM NOVGOROD

*Part of the carving on the tomb of Zosima of Solovetsky 1566  
Tretyakovsky State Picture Gallery, Moscow*



One of the secretaries of the King's Chancellery wrote in despair: "It must be admitted that the Prince has a wonderful land, and everyone will say that he is a great sovereign!" "We are attacking the sun with a mattock!"

"The Polish foragers reported to headquarters that beyond Porkhov there was a rich, densely-populated area, like Mazovia, where the ricks of rye, barley and oats were so high that it was impossible to throw a stone over them. But they could not reach them because hundreds of their number had perished at the hands of the partisans. And the wider the invaders spread in their foraging excursions the tighter the ring of the formidable people's war closed around them."

At Pskov the aim which Bathori had dared to set himself in his victorious advance when he counted on finally routing Moscow was thwarted. He could not even ensure Livonia for Poland as long as Ivan Grozny remained in possession of Narva and was able to maintain communication with Europe. Here a final blow was struck by an enemy which both belligerents had treated with contempt, *viz.*, the Swedes. The Russians withdrew part of the garrison from Narva and sent it to reinforce Pskov. De La Gardie hastened to take advantage of this and with a mixed force of mercenaries, which, incidentally, included Italians and Germans, crossed the ice of the Gulf of Finland and captured Tolsburg, Hapsal, Weissenstein and Narva. To the dangers that already faced Ivan Grozny was added that of an insurrection of the Kazan and Astrakhan Tatars. Moscow's old ally, Denmark, also betrayed her.

Amidst these exceptionally difficult conditions of war the Tsar, physically and spiritually broken, an old man at fifty, found the energy to save his severely shaken state by a brilliant diplomatic move. Remembering the Pope's cherished dream of a rapprochement between the Moscow Orthodox and Roman Catholic Churches, Ivan Grozny decided to utilize the services of the Roman Pontiff as a defender against the formidable conqueror and to invite him to act as mediator in this



grave international conflict. While the Velikie Luki campaign was still in progress the Moscow Ambassador, Istoma Shevrigin, was sent to Italy *via* Livonia and Prague.



Casimir Waliszewski, a Francized Polc, the author of a brilliant, witty, but superficial book on Ivan Grozny, describes Shevrigin's mission in a humorous vein. He depicts him as an ignorant Muscovite who did not know that Venice was an independent state and not part of the Papal dominions, who was not in the least impressed by the art treasures which the Papal Court offered to present to the Tsar and his embassy, and talked too freely about his sovereign's reverses. Waliszewski regards the letter the ambassador brought from the Tsar as queer and tactless, for in it the ruler of Muscovy requests the Pope to *order* Bathori to abandon his alliance with infidels and cease to wage war against Christians.

Was it appropriate, however, to jeer at Shevrigin's ignorance of the political-geographical map of Italy? Were there many at the Papal Court at that time who had a clear idea where Pskov was, on what river Moscow stood, and into which sea the Volga flowed? On the very next page of his book the historian tells us of the message Pope Gregory XIII sent in reply to the Tsar, in which he conveyed greetings to the Tsaritsa Anastasia,<sup>72</sup> who had been dead for twenty years. Judging by this detail, the Papal Chancellery, too, was badly informed, and wanting in tact.

In the same humorous style the author relates how the "barbarian and ignoramus," *i.e.*, the Tsar's emissary, succeeded not only in bringing about a rapprochement between Moscow and Rome, which Poland had so zealously and persistently opposed for a century, but also in inducing Rome to exercise direct pressure on Moscow's enemy. Waliszewski depicts Shevrigin as acting almost like a simpleton in the intricate diplomatic game which ended in the dispatch to Moscow of the

Jesuit Antonio Possevino, and in the conclusion of a peace that was honourable for Ivan IV. He even seems to regard Ivan Grozny himself as a casual figure in this unexpected stroke of fortune. If that were so, however, how is it possible to explain the amazing story of the Pope's intervention and the conclusion of peace? After all, the efforts of the Moscow mission were crowned with success, whereas the scheme that was mooted on its appearance and inspired by the Papal Court and its most skilful emissary, *viz.* of drawing Moscow into a union with Catholicism, proved a sheer delusion on the part of western diplomacy. Who was the simpleton here, and who succeeded in carrying out his entire plan to the end?

The very arrival of the Papal legate at the Court of Moscow before the siege of Pskov was begun indicated to Ivan IV that his position was by no means hopeless. Possevino was given an enthusiastic welcome in Staritsa as the harbinger of peace; but at the same time Ivan Grozny displayed extraordinary restraint. The question of allowing Catholic Churches or any Jesuitical institutions to function in the country was not even raised; the Moscow Court merely gave its consent to the exchange of diplomatic representatives with Rome and to the free transit of Papal missions to Persia. The Papal throne received no privileges. The prospect of Moscow entering the Catholic Church remained as nebulous and vague as before. Meanwhile, the Papal legate was obliged to perform his function as mediator.

He was obliged to incline the fortunate victor towards peace. Possevino tried to bring pressure to bear on Ivan IV by sending him a letter in which he described the desperate situation of Pskov, the approach of reinforcements for the besieging troops, and the inevitable fall of the fortress. The receipt of this letter prompted the Tsar to propose a very definite scheme, which he had drawn up in conjunction with the heir to the throne and the boyars, to the effect that Bathori should retain the Livonian towns which the Lithuanians had captured, but restore to Moscow Velikie Luki, Nevel, Zavolo-

clay, Holm and the suburbs of Pskov which the king had taken. He expressed readiness to send ambassadors to discuss this scheme on the unfailing condition, however, that "the Pope's Ambassador Anthony" acted as mediator.

The Jesuit found himself in an embarrassing position. Both sides distrusted him and refused to reveal their terms to him; and each side, banking on the sore straits his opponent was in, wished to drag out the negotiations. In the beginning, Possevino's winter quarters at Zapolski-Yam, in what was nothing more than a chimneyless peasant's hut, were only a place where the emissaries of the two belligerent powers met to engage in mutual recrimination and to part in great heat.

Ivan IV gave his plenipotentiaries—Prince Yeltsky, Olferyev, the Lieutenant-Governor of Kozelsk, the Dyak Bassenko Vereshchagin and the Pod-Dyak Svyazev—very detailed instructions containing numerous particulars and providing for unforeseen contingencies. These envoys performed their duties with great zeal and fought for the remnants of the Livonian possessions to the very last, so much so that at one moment Zamoyski, almost yielding to their persistence, was ready to give up several fortresses in Livonia. However, the Moscow Tsar was so hard pressed by the war that in his instructions he allowed for the extreme contingency of ceding the whole of Livonia.

The skill of the Moscow ambassadors lay in their handling of the formalities to the observance of which the diplomacy of the Russian Court always attached great importance. They strongly insisted on calling Livonia the patrimony of the Tsar, which the latter was voluntarily yielding to an alien ruler. They tried to get inserted in the treaty the cession of Riga and Courland, which had not up to that time been the possession of Moscow. They took very careful measures to prevent Poland from being able later to lay claim to the territories and towns which had been captured by the Swedes. They argued very stubbornly also over the fortresses on the Dvina, which the enemy had captured. Incidentally, the ques-

tion of Polotsk was not raised; Ivan IV tacitly yielded it, but in the course of the negotiations the Moscow ambassadors succeeded in inducing Bathori to return the Fortress of Sebezh, originally built as an outpost for an attack on Vilna and commanding the outlet from the valley of the River Velikaya.

The discipline under which Ivan IV kept his officials is strikingly illustrated by the following episode. In exchange for Sebezh, Bathori demanded Velizh. Possevino told the Moscow ambassadors that if they hesitated to make this concession for fear of the Tsar's wrath, he would be willing to sacrifice his head for them. In reply to this they stated that even if each of them had ten heads, the Tsar would order them all to be chopped off for such remissness.

The ambassadors displayed the customary manners of Moscow diplomacy. They wrangled long over questions of etiquette and by references to historical archives insisted on the right of their sovereign to the title of Tsar. But the once brilliant and logical scholarship of the Posolski Prikaz was now somewhat dimmed by the deep humiliation which the Moscow Court was now obliged to suffer. After heated arguments, accompanied by threats on the part of the Moscow ambassadors to break off negotiations, Ivan IV was described in the treaty as Grand Prince, and it was revealed that in the instructions which Ivan Grozny had given his ambassadors he had allowed even for this contingency of the lowering of his dignity. In the historical controversy which the ambassadors started, in conformity with the Moscow custom, they failed to come up to the required level and confused their references which, perhaps, were suggested by the Tsar himself. For example, they referred to the granting of the Tsar's title to Prince Vladimir by the Emperors Honorius and Arcadius, but when Possevino pointed out to them that they were five hundred years out in their chronological reckoning, they were not in the least embarrassed but argued that they had in mind two different Emperors named Honorius and Arcadius who lived later. (Novodvorsky is of the opinion that the Moscow ambassadors

confused them with another couple of Emperor-brothers, viz., Basil and Constantine of Byzantium, Vladimir's contemporaries.)

The Zapolski-Yam Peace of 1582 marked the tragic end of the great war. Its main object had been to gain access to the sea, to establish intercourse with Europe and to gain a position in the European international world. But the intervening country of Livonia was in itself a valuable possession in which the Muscovites had succeeded in establishing themselves for twenty years. During the peace negotiations the Moscow plenipotentiaries devoted considerable attention to the recovery of the church property in Livonia. No few Orthodox Churches had been built in the eastern part of the region.

The cession of Livonia involved the repatriation of numerous Russians who had settled there. Heidenstein relates that the Russians left Dorpat with keen regret, as very precious reminiscences were associated with that town. Women gathered at the graves of their husbands and children, fathers and kinsfolk and loudly bewailed their abandonment of their hearths and homes. Another contemporary, the Polish monk Piotrowski, called attention to the evidences of the splendid military organization which the vanquished foes had built up in the Livonian border lands. "We were all amazed," he writes, "to find in all the fortresses numerous cannon and an abundance of powder and cannon balls, more than we ourselves could collect in our own country. . . . It looks as if we have acquired a small Kingdom, but I do not know whether we shall be able to do anything with it."



The Moscow State escaped the doom that threatened it, as also did the dynasty and the power of the Tsar. Ivan IV died in possession of the vast state which he had built at the beginning of his reign and in command of a system of services and duties which he constantly expanded and reformed, although the financial and military organizations were greatly shaken.

What saved the Moscow military monarchy from disaster? To answer this question we would have to recapitulate many of the pages of the present essay and recall the political wisdom and smoothness that was characteristic of the working of the different institutions, and the vast military and financial resources of Muscovy. All this, however, was in a state of decline at the end of the war. The former talented diplomats and military leaders no longer existed in the 'seventies and 'eighties. Ivan Grozny was surrounded by mediocrities; zealous, but second-rate officials. The administrative system which he had created still functioned, however. The governing circles were not dismayed; they retained their self-possession, and their self-respect.

In this period the Moscow State still lived on the reserves of strength it had accumulated in the course of the previous century. The vast, innate energy of the Russian people, which was displayed with such brilliance in the heroic defence of Pskov in 1581, was still alive and unspent.

It was said very long ago that the best praise is heard from an enemy. The Chronicles of Balthazar Russow, a fierce opponent of Muscovy's entry into Livonia, contain an astonishing admission of the heroic qualities of the Russians, which are brought out in still greater relief by the author's ruthless condemnation of his "cultured" compatriots. "The Russians," says Russow, "are good soldiers in fortresses. This is due to the following reason. Firstly, the Russians are an industrious people. When circumstances require it a Russian can work tirelessly, day and night, amidst all dangers, and he prays to God that he may die righteously for his sovereign. Secondly, the Russian is accustomed from early youth to keep the fasts and to be content with meagre fare. As long as he has water, flour, salt and vodka, he can subsist on these for quite a long time, whereas a German cannot. Thirdly, if the Russians voluntarily surrender a fortress, however small, they dare not return home, for they are put to a shameful death. In foreign lands they hold a fortress to the last man and prefer to *perish to the*

*last man rather than be led under escort to a foreign land. To a German it makes no difference whatever where he lives, as long as he has enough to eat and drink. Fourthly, the Russians regard it not only as a disgrace but also as a mortal sin to surrender a fortress."* (My italics.—R.W.)

While lauding the patriotism of the Russians and contrasting it to the indifference of the Germans, Russow nevertheless notes only the passive virtues of the Russian people, their strength in defence, thanks to which alone the state, so severely shaken by the campaign of 1579-1581, was saved. But we must recall also the active qualities of the Russian people, without which Ivan Grozny could not have achieved his victories, nor have built up his great state. To organize these victories Ivan Grozny put increasing strain upon the productive forces of the people and immensely increased the burden of duties, military and fiscal. This overstrain had dangerous consequences for the autocracy. It roused the resistance of the peasants which was manifested in the revolts which began, probably, in 1570, at the time of the unrest in the Novgorod region. These were the harbingers of the great peasant war of the beginning of the seventeenth century, which revealed another and most valuable of the active qualities of the people, viz., capacity for revolution.

Ivan Grozny inherited this treasure and the right to lead this people into battle, to utilize its strength for the building of a great state. Nature had endowed him with exceptional talent as an administrator and military organizer. His guilt, or misfortune, lay in that having set himself the object of gaining access to the sea and establishing direct intercourse with the industrially and technically developed West, he could not halt in time before the growing power of his enemies: in that towards the end, in an unequal and fruitless struggle, he threw into the abyss of destruction a large part of the treasures accumulated by his predecessors and acquired by himself and thus exhausted the resources of the state that he had built

Parallel with this national, social and political tragedy, and influenced by it, Ivan Grozny suffered his own private grief (the death of his beloved son Ivan). His powerful constitution was sapped, his talents waned, and his nervous energy gave out.

### 10

The ten years' armistice concluded in Zapolski-Yain in January 1582 was regarded by both sides only as a temporary breathing space, and both sides began energetically to prepare for another war. The possession of Livonia, the gaining of access to the Baltic Sea, was a vital question for both rivals.

That Ivan Grozny refused to be appeased in spite of the severe setbacks he had suffered, of this there cannot be the slightest doubt. Eloquent proof of his tirelessness is provided by all the measures he took in the sphere of domestic policy, the dominant motive of all of which was to help the military service class to emerge from the economic crisis into which the country was plunged, to restore the fighting efficiency of the armed forces, to augment their ranks, to find means for compensating them for the losses they had suffered, to provide them with means for running their estates properly, and of acquiring the best possible armaments.

These measures were of a diverse character. They included all possible methods of pressure upon the wealthy landowners, such as were the higher clergy and the big monasteries, confiscation of their gifts and deposits, and also the abolition of *tarkhan*, i.e., the ancient privilege enjoyed by the monasteries of exemption from taxes and duties. All this was to have augmented the financial resources of the state and enlarged the land funds, the grants from which were controlled by the *Pomestny Prikaz*. The same chief motive—to rehabilitate the service class which had been affected by the crisis—governed Ivan Grozny's administration in solving the labour problem in the manors, the solution of which consisted mainly in the regulation of the transfer of peasants from one manor to another.



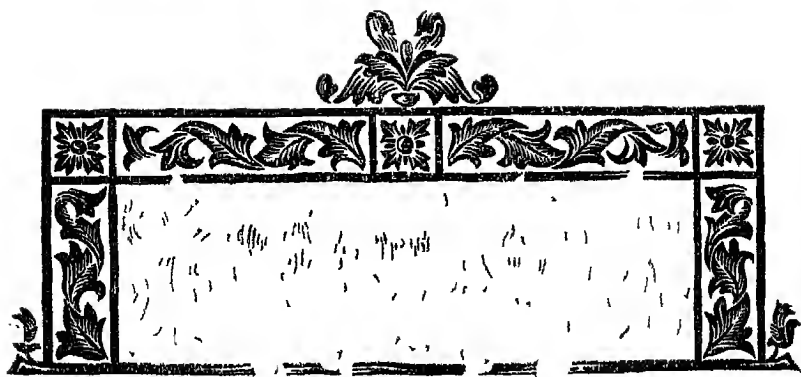
Immediately after the Livonian War came to an end two administrative measures were introduced, which may be regarded as the official introduction of serfdom. The first of these was the "Ulozhenie" (edict) which restricted the transfer or conveyance of peasants on St. George's Day. On the basis of this general order the following year, 1581, was proclaimed "interdicted," *i.e.*, a year during which the peasants were not allowed to leave the manors to which they were attached in one way or another. The prohibition was proclaimed to be temporary, but was to remain in force "during His Majesty's pleasure." Actually, it remained in force until 1586, when the right of transfer was restored. The subsequent governments of Fedor Ivanovich and Boris Godunov<sup>73</sup> followed the example set by Ivan Grozny in 1581 and introduced temporary measures by which interdicted years alternated with free years, until the complete abolition of the right of St. George's Day by the edict of Vasili Shuiski,<sup>74</sup> issued as a reactionary punitive law in 1607, during the great peasant insurrection. The second measure, also introduced in 1581, was the census, completed in 1592, which was to put a complete stop to the transfer of peasants from one master to another. The names of the peasants living on a certain estate at the time of the census were entered in the *Pislsovie Knigi*, or registers. Later, these registers served as proof that the peasants concerned were "old inhabitants" and did not enjoy the right of transfer.

Were these measures an innovation which ran counter to the government's former social policy, and did they indicate a turn to a different social path? No. They must be regarded as a continuation of the line which Grozny had pursued from the beginning of his independent administration, a line of combating the claims of the big landowners and of protecting the interests of the medium and small manor owners. The right of St. George's Day benefited only the big patrimony owners and the extremely wealthy monasteries, which enticed peasants to their estates by favourable conditions and thus left the minor landowners without hands with which to cultivate their lands. The government abolished the right of transfer,

not at one stroke by means of a decisive, general and final measure formulating a principle, but by means of temporary prohibitions, renewed from time to time.

The idea of introducing "interdict years" may have been suggested to the government by the landowners of the Shelonskaya Pyatina, *i.e.*, the former Novgorod region on the north-western border of the Moscow State. This is very characteristic. The demand that the peasants should be tied to the land on which they had once settled to ensure a constant contingent of labourers for the estates came from the servicemen in the region which had been the theatre of incessant war, which had suffered most from that war, and had been devastated and depopulated by it. The manor owners of that region, all the middle and small landowners, felt the shortage of labour with exceptional acuteness and demanded immediate direct assistance from the administration. But the consequences of this appeal to the authorities by private persons, by the local group of manor owners, was extremely wide and significant. The government made the measure for ensuring a constant supply of labourers for the estates—which the manor owners of the northwest borderland had appealed for in view of their local urgent need—a rule for the whole country. This generalization of the prohibition of transfer may, in its turn, be regarded as the origin of official serfdom.





## A POSTHUMOUS JUDGMENT OF IVAN GROZNY

Had Ivan IV died in 1566, at the height of his great successes on the western front and of his preparations for the final conquest of Livonia, history would have awarded him, as it did Alexander of Macedonia, the title of great conqueror and builder of one of the greatest states in the world. The blame for losing the Baltic regions which he had vanquished would have fallen upon his successors. It was only Alexander the Great's premature death which prevented that monarch from witnessing the collapse of the empire he had created.

In the event of such an early demise, at the age of thirty-six, Ivan IV would have remained in historical tradition surrounded with the glory of a great reformer, organizer of a military service class, and the initiator of the administrative centralization of the Moscow State.

A different, profoundly tragic fate fell to the lot of Ivan Grozny, however. He lived on for another eighteen years, and these were years of heavy losses and great misfortunes for the country. Towards the end of the 'sixties, the difficulties of the war increased exceedingly and his enemies gained in strength. Muscovy was again cut off from Europe and thrown back upon

her own as yet undeveloped resources. During the long, draw-out struggle the rich reserves which had been accumulated in the preceding period were gradually exhausted; the country was despoiled, depopulated; its economy—in the borderlands particularly, but also in the interior—declined as a consequence of the shortage of labour.

The introduction of the promising military, social and administrative reforms initiated so auspiciously in the 'fifties, began, in 1564, to be complicated by the struggle against treason. Surrounded by opponents of his bold policy, by apprehensive conservatives and numerous traitors, having nearly perished as a consequence of the plot of 1567, and having lived through the frightful years of the Crimea peril of 1571-1572, Ivan Grozny still found the strength to wage a war for access to the sea, for wide channels of intercourse with Europe, until, at the end of the 'seventies, his last military and financial resources ran out. In spite of all the difficulties, he continued in the great task of centralizing the administration by developing the institutions of the "sovereign's appanage" or "Court," which in 1572 replaced the Oprichnina of 1565.

Failure in the foreign war and the sanguinary internal war—the fight against treason—eclipsed in the eyes of the ensuing generations the military and great centralizing achievements of the reign of Ivan Grozny. Most of the historians of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries succumbed to the influence of sources which emanated from opposition quarters. The personality of the Tsar was belittled in their eyes. He fell into the category of "tyrant" and was associated with Caligula, Nero, Louis XI and Christian II. The problem of ascertaining his role as a ruler was obscured by petty disputes about his personal qualities; pathological and psychiatric questions practically occupied first place.

In this essay I have tried as far as it was possible to restore the historic importance of Ivan Grozny as one of the great political and military leaders of Europe of the sixteenth century. It only remains for me to trace in a few pages the literary process by which the hostile judgment of his activities was formed.



T THE BEGINNING of the seventeenth century there appeared in France de Thon's or Thuanus' (b. 1553, d. 1617) monumental work *Universal History* which was written in Latin and immediately after translated into French. This book, which soon became popular and was republished many times even as late as the eighteenth century, contains a detailed account of the fate of the state of Europe, including Muscovy, during the second half of the sixteenth century. In it we obtain certain characteristic data which enable us to judge the opinion about Ivan IV that prevailed in Western Europe among the generations that immediately followed him.

In proceeding to relate the history of the Livonian War de Thou gives an outline of the history of Muscovy's ascendancy. Concerning Ivan IV himself he wrote: "A sovereign as fortunate as he was brave, like his fathers, who, in addition, combining cunning and shrewdness with stern discipline in military affairs, not only preserved the extensive state left by Vasili, but succeeded in greatly extending its frontiers. Ivan IV's conquests reached the Caspian Sea and the Kingdom of Persia. This Tsar is celebrated for his great deeds, the brilliance of which was sometimes dimmed by his cruelty." The historian then goes on to tell us about the wonderful military system of the Moscow State and the extraordinary obedience of the troops and adds: "There is not a sovereign who was loved more or was served more zealously and faithfully. Good sovereigns who treat their people mildly and humanely win no purer attachment than he won."

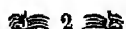
De Thou relates in detail the course of the Livonian War, the negotiations between Poland and Lithuania, and especially Ivan IV's struggle against Bathori. The conclusion, so gloomy for Muscovy, compels the historian to pass a judgment on the Tsar which to some extent contradicts the preceding one. "So ended the *Moscow War*," he writes, "in which Tsar Ivan failed to uphold the reputation of his ancestors and his own. The en-

the country along the Dnieper to Chernigov, and along the Dvina to the Staritsa, the Novgorod and Ladoga regions, were utterly ruined. The Tsar lost over three hundred thousand men, and about forty thousand were carried away as captives. These losses reduced the regions of Velikie Luki, Zavolochye, Novgorod and Pskov to a wilderness, for all the young people of these regions perished in the war, and the older ones left no descendants.'

Evidently de Thou wrote on the basis of information obtained mainly from Polish and Livonian authors, and also from the reports of diplomatic missions which had visited Moscow. Some of the details of his narrative, for example, his explanation of the loyalty of the Russian people to the Tsar and their exalted piety, or his description of the great lamentation of the Russians during their exodus from Dorpat, are almost a direct repetition of the narratives of the foreign authors who were Ivan Grozny's contemporaries. But as regards Ivan IV's tyranny, de Thou criticizes their evidence. He writes: "This sovereign is reputed to have been frightfully cruel, if we are to believe the reports of Paul Oederborn<sup>75</sup> and Alexander Guagnini, whose writings probably contain more conjecture than truth."

Judging by de Thou's narrative, the Moscow, *i. e.*, Livonian, War created a powerful impression in Western Europe. The historian regards as important and notable the speeches the Tsar delivered in the Baltic region, his manifestoes, his treaties with the Livonian towns and Orders, and the Russians' attempts at colonization. The last three years of the war, Bathori's successes, and the defeat of the Moscow State are objects of the narrator's closest attention. He regards the disaster that befell Muscovy as one of the outstanding events in sixteenth-century Europe. At the same time, this West-European historian appears to have been unaware of the banishments, executions and the Tsar's war against his subjects; Ivan IV's cruelty did not seem to him to be anything out of the ordinary. He does not portray the Moscow Tsar as the wicked and demented tyrant we are familiar with from the schoolbooks, and which enabled the historians of later times to translate the significant, and on

the lips of Russians extremely majestic, surname "Grozny" by the vulgar words "Jean le Terrible." "Iwan der Schreckliche" or "Ivan the Terrible."



The enhanced attention to Ivan Grozny's cruelties the stern and withering moral verdict on his personality, the proneness to regard him as a man of unbalanced mind, all belong to the age of sentimental enlightenment and high society liberalism. Hence, there is hardly a more ruthless appraisal of Ivan Grozny than the one made by Karamzin, the most outstanding Russian historian and publicist of the period of enlightened despotism, who seems to have written his unfavourable characterization of Ivan IV only in order to bring out more sharply the shining virtues of Alexander I and of his "illustrious grandmother," monarchs who, of course, were extremely humane and just, and exceptionally devoted to the people's welfare. One may say that in his portrait Karamzin gave us a classical scheme for the appraisal of Grozny's personality and moral policy which the historians of the nineteenth century were unable to reject, viz., up to 1560 the Tsar was splendid, kind and wise, in so far as he was under the influence of wise guides; after 1560 his evil nature came to the surface, a wicked, rampant dementia, which distorted sound political principles. The Russian historians of later times, while refraining from idealizing enlightened monarchy, nevertheless adhered to this unfavourable appraisal of Ivan Grozny. Partly this was due to the fact that the condemnation of the autocrat as tyrant was one of the noble motives of oppositional liberal rhetoric.

The obstinacy of the historians of the nineteenth century is also partly due to the state of the sources concerning the period of Ivan Grozny's reign. Ivan IV was unlucky as regards literary defenders. Peresvetov, who, incidentally, remained unknown until the end of the nineteenth century, was only a distant prophet of Ivan Grozny's policy who soon vanished from

the scene without leaving a trace. Chronologically he was followed, as Russian witnesses, by the representatives of the conservative opposition, *viz.*, Kurbski, by the author of *Discourses of the Balaam Muacle Workers*, and the later writers of the period of the peasant war, Dyak Ivan Timofeyev and Prince Katirev-Rostovsky.

All of these suffer from a defect which played a fatal role in establishing Grozny's reputation. They were absolutely indifferent to the growth of the Moscow State, its great unifying mission, Ivan IV's broad designs, his military innovations and his brilliant diplomacy. To some extent these judges of Ivan Grozny resemble Seneca, Tacitus and Juvenal who, in their sharp attacks of the Roman despots, concentrated their attention on Court and metropolitan affairs and remained indifferent to the vastness, the borderlands, the external security and the glory of the celebrated empire. The historians of the nineteenth century harp in different keys upon one and the same theme: condemnation of the cruelties of the Moscow Tsar. They lay most stress on the rift which Ivan IV caused in the life of Muscovy by dividing her society into an Oprichnina and a Zemshchina. "And his Kingdom, which he received from God, was divided into two parts: one part he apportioned to himself and the other to Tsar Simeon of Kazan [the substitute Tsar] . . . and the people of his own part were violated and put to death, their homes were plundered and the voyevodas, given him by God, were innocently killed, and most beautiful towns were wrecked and all the Orthodox Christians mercilessly killed, even down to tiny infants." (The narrative of Prince Ivan Mikhailovich Katirev-Rostovsky.)

It never occurred to anyone of them to say a word about the military and political significance of the Oprichnina. These ancient critics of Muscovy were amazingly prone to indulge in moral abstractions. The author of the *Balaam Discourses*, a monk and supporter of the poverty party, was shocked most of all by the predominance of secular interests among the higher clergy, and attacked the very concept "autocrat." To this

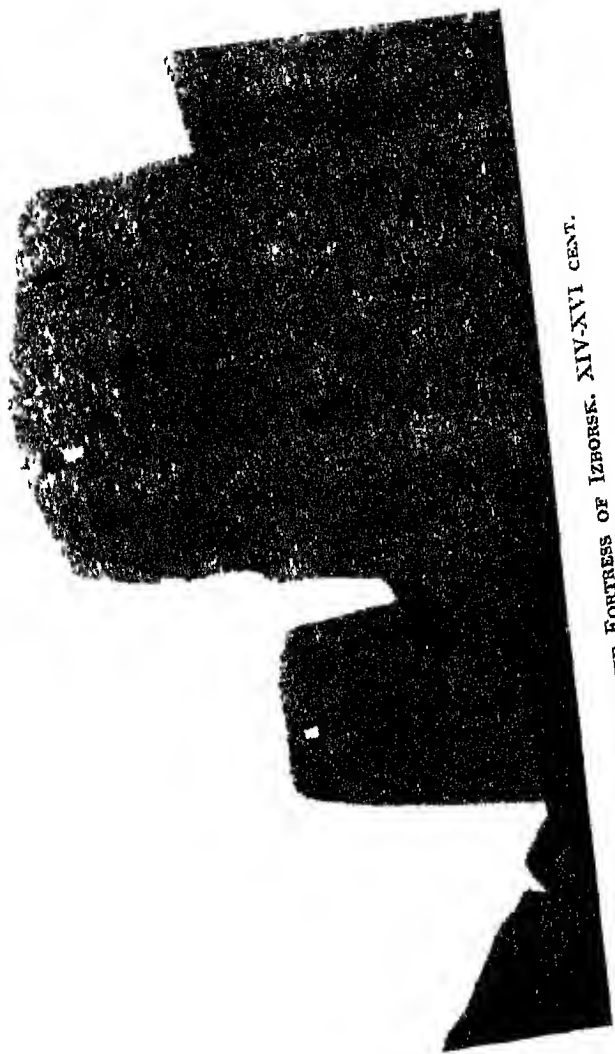


peaceful anarchist the term sounds frightful, like excessive pride before God. Like Kurbski, he longed for a return to the patriarchal monarchy, when the Tsar governed in close harmony with the best constant advisers.

Kurbski expected no good from the innovations and continuous changes introduced by the restless spirit of the Tsar and prophesied the collapse of the Moscow State as a consequence of the plethora of "difficult and incomprehensible Nomocanons." Kurbski's narrative fits in with that of Ivan Timofeyev, the author of "*Vremennik*" (*Chronicles*), who relates the events of the revolutionary epoch. Trying to explain the causes of the widespread ruin, he puts the blame primarily on the political changes which were introduced by the government itself. As long as the sovereigns kept within the limits of God's commandments and sacredly guarded the pious traditions of olden days the people of Muscovy remained in strict obedience. When, however, "the rulers . . . began to change the ancient laws of our fathers and to convert good custom into the opposite," the "natural fear" of the subjects began to disappear. The annalist of the "time of troubles" wanted to say that the roots of the disastrous revolution lay in the conduct of the rulers themselves. Their reforms struck the first blow at the existing order.

Strictly speaking, the complaints of the conservatives about the abolition of ancient customs by the ruling power itself were not new. Similar complaints were uttered two score years before Kurbski by the banished Boyar Bersen,<sup>70</sup> who was indignant because Vasili III began to deal with affairs of state in his bedroom, shutting himself up in there with two of his favourites. Bersen added the gloomy forecast that Kurbski made later: "The state which changes ancient customs is shortlived."

The accusation against the monarch of going to extremes is repeated generation after generation, but the critics date the beginning of the political misfortune at different periods. Bersen regarded as the cause of the "replacements of land and discord among the great" the arrival at the Court of Ivan III of the Greeks who accompanied the Tsarevna Sophia Palaeologue,



WALLS OF THE FORTRESS OF IZHORSK. XIV-XVI CENT.



*i.e.*, he placed the disastrous events at the seventies of the fifteenth century, whereas Ivan Timofeyev, who was prone to associate the beginning of the misfortunes with Ivan Grozny's Oprichnina, was evidently thinking of the sixties and seventies of the sixteenth century. Great as the difference in the chronology may be, both have the same phenomena in mind, and we observe with some astonishment that both are writing about the main facts in Moscow's policy, *i.e.*, the formation of the Great Russian State.

We thus get a strange contradiction: the great organizers of Muscovy, Ivan III and Ivan IV, proved to be at the same time the causes of her disaster.

In so far as they trusted the thoughts of the opposition of the sixteenth century the Russian historians of the nineteenth century were obliged to reconcile the stern judgment of the contemporaries of that period with a generally favourable appraisal of the Great-Power policy pursued by the Moscow government. It seemed as though the solution of this contradiction lies in the assumption that the cautious system introduced by the founder of the state was upset by the arbitrary conduct of his grandson, the last autocrat-but-one of the Ruric dynasty. Hence the outrages committed by Ivan Grozny's Oprichnina and his queer and restless administration had to serve as an explanation for the ensuing "disruption." All the great work that was performed during his youth seemed to have been eclipsed and upset by his frenzied caprices. V. O. Kluchevsky regards the institution of the Oprichnina as a struggle not against the social system but against persons, and he appraises Ivan IV himself merely as a gifted dilettante. S. F. Platonov admits that the institution of the Oprichnina was part of a broad and in many respects expedient military-administrative plan, but he condemns Ivan Grozny's nervous activity in shifting people from one place to another, changing them from one office to another, constantly dispersing them and breaking up institutions, thus preventing people from establishing themselves in a given office and from settling down to their administrative affairs, all of which,

in the end, wrecked the foundations of the system he had built up in his early years and brought nearer the "time of troubles."

In their judgments, however, these writers lost sight of a very important circumstance, *viz.*, that Ivan Grozny's greatest social and administrative reforms—his struggle against the minor princes, his elevation of common people at the expense of the ancient boyars, his tightening up of military service and increasing of public burdens and the centralization of administration—were introduced not in peacetime, but amidst great military upheavals. Virtually Ivan IV's reign was an almost incessant war. In 1551-1556 there was the war for the Volga region, and in 1558 commenced the greatest war in Russian history which lasted twenty-four years—the war for Livonia, for an outlet to the sea, complicated by fierce collisions with the Crimea, Poland and Sweden.

The situation was very similar to that of Peter I whose object in life was also to gain this "Window into Europe."

At all events history's verdict on Ivan Grozny should not be sterner than that on Peter I, bearing in mind that the conditions under which the Moscow Tsar operated in the sixteenth century were ever so much more severe than those under which Peter I operated. If Ivan Grozny is to be condemned, then he must be blamed either for the very idea of waging the war, or at least for having failed to abandon this unsuccessful undertaking in time, for having wasted the best forces of his state in Livonia. But the more we insist on accusations of this kind the further we get away from the characterization of Ivan IV as a capricious tyrant.

If Ivan Grozny was mistaken as regards the possibility of acquiring the Baltic coast, then at all events there is no frivolousness or caprice in the iron determination with which he waged the war, sent his armed forces into battle year after year, exercised his technical-administrative and commercial-political skill, influenced the inhabitants of the newly-acquired country persistently, in a score of ways, by threats and by kindness, strove to win over foreigners and to stimulate the energy of the Russian merchants,



The limited judgment of Ivan Grozny that is characteristic of the historians of the nineteenth century is partly to be explained by their ignorance of numerous extremely important sources which have been discovered during the past two decades and partly to the fact that most of them belong to the liberal bourgeois school.

They easily succumbed to the influence of Fletcher, one of the brilliant writers of the heroic period of liberalism, whose well-known work on the Russian state appeared as the result of his mission to Moscow in 1589.

Fletcher arrived in Moscow five years after the death of Ivan Grozny to set to rights the affairs of the English trading company, which had suffered as a consequence of the operations of its own agents, and to plead for a further extension of its rights and monopolies in the Moscow State.

During the ceremonies at the Moscow Court he violated the rules of etiquette by refusing to pronounce the Tsar's title in full, for which he was denied personal audiences with the Tsar and was compelled to conduct negotiations with an official, the Dyak Shchelkalov, thereby placing himself in an unfavourable position at the very outset.

Fletcher had to explain his failure to Queen Elizabeth, for he had counted on occupying the place of Elizabeth's Court historiographer. He decided that he could achieve both object—by writing a description of the Kingdom of Muscovy and depicting its methods of government which were "Quite unlike Your [Majesty's] own," as he wrote in his preface, *i.e.*, if he depicted Moscow as a barbarous country governed by cruel, Asiatic methods, ignorant and decaying as a consequence of its being unfamiliar with enlightened Europe. Against this gloomy background the lawful and constitutional government of the English Queen would stand but all the brighter.

According to Fletcher the Russian people had the government they deserved. The vices of one side caused the vices of

the other. The Russians were untruthful, dishonest, prone to violence and distrustful of each other. The Russian people were split into two classes, an upper and a lower, each hating the other. This was due to the deliberate policy of the cruel and wicked government and was fostered by the cunning selfishness of the clergy which tried to keep the people in ignorance. He regarded Ivan Grozny as "a man of high spirits and of subtle mind," a perfect representative of diabolical Machiavellian policy. He crushed the high-born aristocracy, exterminated the "nobility" whom he hated, and dragged new people out of the mire and obscurity not for democratic motives, but in order to foment class hostility and thereby rule over them with greater impunity. With the same object he allowed his officials to oppress and rob the people.

Again and again Fletcher reverts to the subject of the incredible oppression suffered by the common people, although he cannot quote any facts in proof of his assertions.

In his comprehensive work on Fletcher S. N. Seredoniuk shows how superficial and often incorrect are the data quoted by this author concerning the structure of Moscow institutions, and how his picture of the Russian administration was influenced by his preconceived ideas. A striking example of Fletcher's shallowness and even unscrupulousness, is provided by his explanation of the role of the Gubnoy Starosta, or Gubernatorial Elders, whom he regards as the assistants and subordinates of the Lieutenant-Governors and officials sent from the centre. He totally failed to understand the system of local government that was characteristic of sixteenth-century Muscovy. Incidentally, the superficiality of his observations caused him to overlook what would have been a striking illustration of Ivan Grozny's despotism. He says nothing at all about the Oprichnina, although there was a great deal in this institution which would have provided grounds for accusing the Tsar of being a narrow egoist.

Fletcher wrote in the period of nascent political liberalism, represented in the sixteenth century by the talented school of

"Monarchomachus." French publicists who condemned unlimited monarchy. Their eloquent, sonorous and audacious phrases about the harmfulness of unlimited monarchy, about the rights of the people being protected by representatives of public opinion, and about the wisdom of parliamentarism often served to cover up the barrenness of their own program, the aristocratic narrow-mindedness and selfishness of the class to which the orators and writers who sang the praises of liberty belonged. Enchanted by all forms of opposition to autocracy, the historians of the nineteenth century easily slipped into the rut of the early naive denunciations of despotism and for that reason willingly accepted the judgment of the fathers of liberalism, the sixteenth-century publicists.

Fletcher, who enjoyed no success in his time and was persecuted by the English merchant company which feared that his sharp criticism would spoil its relations with Moscow, was highly appreciated in the nineteenth century. His political verdict and his denunciation of the Russian people suited the book of those historians who failed to understand the profound gifts, the great mental, social and technical talent of the Russian people.



The last in order of discovery of the documents of foreign origin which could in one way or another influence the judgment of twentieth-century Russian historians regarding Ivan Grozny were the *Memoirs of Muscovy* of Staden and Schlichting.

Had these *Memoirs* appeared fifteen or twenty years earlier, when Ivan Grozny's mental balance was still a subject of debate in Russian historical science, when many still regarded the Oprichnina as an instrument for carrying out arbitrary banishments, confiscations and executions, the pictures painted by these German Oprichniks and even their phraseology would have met with success; they would have strengthened the position of those scholars who developed the theory that personal tyranny and neurotic caprice predominated in Ivan Grozny's policy.



They would have retorted to every sceptic: "What's the use of arguing when we have the evidence of witnesses?"

It is different now when the evidence of the sixteenth century has been taken up by investigators who operate according to the Marxist method, who ascertain what the production relations, the class division of society and the class struggle were like in the given period, and who study a government's policy in connection with the social movement. It is precisely for the successful investigation of the history of the sixteenth century, and especially of Ivan Grozny's policy that we should remember the main thesis presented by J. V. Stalin as far back as 1913, couched in the following classical terms: "In Russia the role of welder of nationalities was assumed by the Great Russians who were headed by an aristocratic military bureaucracy, which had been historically formed and was powerful and well-organized."\* Is it possible for modern scholars, having such a serious and complex task before them, to succumb to the naive conceptions of the adventurers of the sixteenth century which were based on gossip collected by foreigners living in Moscow of the most dubious political and moral character, by professional traitors one might say?

The judgment of the newly-discovered sixteenth-century witnesses has played some role in historical research, if only a negative one. It has served to dispel once and for all the myth in which it was customary to depict Ivan Grozny in the form of a stage tyrant in Russian and in world history.

The publication of the above-mentioned pamphlets provided an additional motive for turning to other sources which, in their turn, enabled us to start on historical constructive work in establishing the genuine social and political features of the institutions of the period of Ivan Grozny.

The appearance, though belated, in historical science of these sixteenth-century productions served to dispel still another myth which contained the judgment on Russia and the Rus-

\* J. V. Stalin, *Marxism and the National Question*, Moscow, 1945. Eng. ed., p. 17.

sian people of the majority of Europeans, a myth, and an indictment, which today is answered not by historical research, but by the entire diverse life of the great Russian people.

One cannot help asking: where, under what circumstances, and why was this forgotten document extracted from the dusty archives? True, at the very first reading of Staden's *Memoirs* every historian will say that it is one of the most outstanding productions of sixteenth-century European political literature, but that it concerns only Russia and the Russian people. Nevertheless, after the Russian historian had translated the original German manuscript the representatives of German science took up its study with redoubled attention and produced their variants of Staden's work.

The question arises: why did they display so much zeal over a document that dealt with, to them, a foreign and distant land?

It would take too long to deal with the trends and motives which developed in German science after the first World War, commencing with 1918, but the substance may be summed up in a few words. Bellicose nationalism was gaining strength in Germany: the ground was being prepared for blind and frenzied fascism. The German scholars, most of whom had lost the ability to think independently, being obedient to feudal discipline and not having really reached even the level of liberal bourgeois science, submitted to the trend mapped out by the fascist authorities; and these authorities ordered the whole of the German people to march to the East to crush the Slavonic world, to reduce the Russian people to the position of slaves to German masters. In this campaign the German scholars were to play the part of pioneers—to collect proof of the physical unfitness and cultural incompetence of the Slavonic race in general, and of the Russian people in particular.

It is quite understandable why German science clutched at Staden. It discovered in his *Memoirs* the indictment against the Russian people it was seeking, the prologue to the campaign against the U.S.S.R. which was to be based upon "historical

ground-." With what elation the German scholars read the heading of Staden's scheme: "A Plan for Transforming Muscovy into a Province of the Empire!" With what rapture they responded to Staden's call to plunder the land of Russia: "The towns and villages must become the free booty of the soldiers!" With what zest they read the German traitor's jeers at the "ignorance and barbarism" of the Russian people, at its "inability" to defend their country!

In fascist Germany Staden's *Memoirs* became a book of the day, a prophesy and a program for the future.

The malicious myth, resurrected with its aid, about the inability of the Russian people to defend their country has been dispelled by our Great Patriotic War, has been scattered to the winds by our heroic Red Army. The duty of giving a correct historical interpretation of this great event of our days is one that rests on the scientists of the U.S.S.R.





## EXPLANATORY NOTES

<sup>1</sup> *The Golden Horde*. The Mongolian Tatar State established on the Volga which ruled over ancient Rus from the middle of the XIII to the end of the XV century. P. 9.

<sup>2</sup> *Sulciman II, the Magnificent* (1520-1566). The Sultan of Turkey. His reign marked the peak of the Osman power. P. 10.

<sup>3</sup> *Selim I* (1512-1520). Suleiman II's predecessor. P. 11.

<sup>4</sup> *Vasili III* (1505-1533). Grand Prince of Muscovy. Son of Ivan III and Sophia Palaeologue. (Cf. note 27.) Joined Pskov and Ryazan to Muscovy. Restored Smolensk to Rus. P. 12.

<sup>5</sup> *Sigismund I* (1467-1548). In 1506 was crowned King of Poland and Grand Prince of Lithuania. P. 13.

*Sigismund II, Augustus* (1520-1572). Was crowned King of Poland in 1548. The last of the Jagielloes to occupy the Polish throne. P. 13.

<sup>6</sup> *Ivan III* (1440-1505). Grand Prince of Muscovy. Ascended the throne in 1462. In order to unite Rus under the dominion of Muscovy abolished the appanage principalities and the independence of the Common Council regions. Also waged a struggle against Lithuania for the Russian lands the latter had seized. In 1480 completely liberated Rus from the Tatar yoke. Was married to Sophia Palaeologue, niece of the last of the Byzantine Emperors. P. 13.

<sup>7</sup> *Ivan IV*. Tsar of Muscovy (born 1530). Reigned 1547-1584. P. 13.

<sup>8</sup> *Elizabeth of England* (born 1533). Reigned 1558-1603. P. 13.

<sup>9</sup> *Philip II of Spain* (born 1527). Reigned 1555-1598. P. 13.

<sup>10</sup> *William of Orange* (born 1533, died 1584). P. 13.

<sup>11</sup> *The Stroganovs*, Yakov and Grigory. Moscow merchants, industrialists and colonizers of the cis-Urals. Pioneers in the conquest of the Trans-Urals (1574), the military colonization of Kola and the subjugation of Siberia. P. 14.

<sup>12</sup> *Yermak* (died 1584). A Cossack Ataman. In 1581 the Stroganovs put him in command of the expedition sent to conquer Siberia, which was crowned with success in 1582. P. 14.

<sup>13</sup> *Stephen Bathori* (1533-1586). Was crowned King of Poland in 1575. Waged war against Muscovy for Livonia, ending in the conquest of Lettland and Polotsk. P. 16.

<sup>11</sup> *Prus*. The legendary brother of the Roman Emperor Augustus. Wishing to add greater lustre to their names, the Russian Tsars traced their descent to him. P. 18.

<sup>12</sup> *Bojars*. Large feudal landowners, the ruling class of feudal Rus.

*Sons of bojars*. The minor nobility who received land in fief from the government, in return for which they were obliged to render military and administrative service. P. 21.

<sup>13</sup> *Appanage (udel)*. The title given in the XIII-XIV centuries in ancient Rus to the domains of the princes. The princes *delili*, i.e., divided their domains among their sons, hence the term *udel*. P. 25.

<sup>14</sup> *Dmitri Donskoi* (1350-1389). Grand Prince of Vladimir and Muscovy. An outstanding statesman and military commander, famous for the victory he achieved over the Tatar Khan Mamai in the Battle in Kulikovo Field in 1380. P. 25.

<sup>15</sup> "*Knyazhata*." Strictly speaking, princes' sons. Here used in the sense of descendants of princes. P. 27.

<sup>16</sup> *Sultan Mohammed, II—El Fatikh*. Sultan of Turkey. Born 1430. Reigned 1451-1481. Conquered Constantinople in 1453. A gifted military leader and statesman. Promoted the prosperity of his country and patronized science and poetry. P. 30.

<sup>17</sup> *The Nomocanon*, or *Kormehaya Kniga*. A compilation of Byzantine church canons, combined with the civil laws governing the church. P. 32.

<sup>18</sup> *Maxim the Greek* (1480-1556). A celebrated promoter of Russian education. Educated in Italy, where he closely associated with prominent men of the period of the Renaissance. At the invitation of Grand Prince Vasili of Muscovy came to Moscow as a translator. Translated a number of ecclesiastical books. Strongly denounced the outward piety, dissolute living, usurious practices, the profound ignorance and the superstition of the Muscovy boyars and nobility. For his close association with Bersen (cf. note 76) and Vassyan Kosoy (the Squint-Eyed) and for his strong opposition to the Grand Prince's intention to divorce his wife, he was excommunicated on the charge of heresy and of practicing black magic, and incarcerated in a monastery. He was subsequently reinstated in the church, but not allowed to return to his country, notwithstanding the pleas of the Patriarchs of Antioch, Constantinople and Jerusalem on his behalf. P. 34.

<sup>19</sup> *The Grand Prince's Code of 1497*. A code of laws strictly confined to matters of procedure. Laid down the main principles of the administration of justice and control by the central power. P. 34.

<sup>20</sup> *The Tsar's Code of 1550*. A code of laws, differing from the Code of 1497 in that it contained fifteen statutes defining penalties for false accusation, the offering of bribes, denial of justice, and for various irregularities in the administration of justice. P. 34.

<sup>24</sup> "*Patrimony*" (*Otchina, or votchina*). Hereditary feudal domains. P. 38

<sup>25</sup> *Monomachus*. The surname of Vladimir, Grand Prince of Kiev (1113-1125). One of the most remarkable of Russian Princes of Kiev Rus, famous for his struggles against his nomad neighbours and his endeavour to unite the appanage princes. P. 38

<sup>26</sup> *Yaroslav I, the Wise* (born 978). Reigned 1018-1054. One of the most distinguished princes of ancient Rus. To him is ascribed the most ancient code of Russian laws, *Russkaya Pravda*. P. 38.

<sup>27</sup> *Sophia Palaiologue* (died 1503). Wife of Ivan III, Grand Prince of Moscow, and niece of the last of the Byzantine Emperors. P. 45.

<sup>28</sup> *Joseph Volotsky* (Ivan Sanin, 1440-1515). The ideologist of the Moscow autocracy and leader of the feudal churchmen who fought for the preservation of all the privileges and landed possessions of the church. In 1479 founded the monastery which became the citadel of the militant monks. In 1579 the Tsar of Moscow canonized him. P. 46.

<sup>29</sup> *Nilus Sorsky* (1433-1508). A celebrated Russian divine, distinguished for his tolerance toward heretics. Protested against the strivings of the monasteries to enlarge their landed possessions. An opponent of ritual and the decoration of churches. P. 46.

<sup>30</sup> *Maximilian II* (born 1527). Reigned 1564-1576. Wavered between the German Catholics and Protestants. P. 47.

<sup>31</sup> *Casimir IV of the Jagiello Dynasty* (born 1427). Grand Prince of Lithuania (1440) and King of Poland (1447). P. 48.

<sup>32</sup> *Manorial system*. The system of granting land in fief to the nobility on the condition of serving the Tsar. P. 53.

<sup>33</sup> *The Novgorod Republic*. Great Novgorod, with the lands belonging to it stretching to the Urals. Here the Common Council system achieved its fullest development. Was actually governed by the boyars and merchants. In 1478 was annexed to Moscow. P. 54.

<sup>34</sup> *Zemski Sobor*. The name given in the XVI-XVII centuries to the assembly originally convoked by the government and later consisting of representatives of the boyars, the clergy, the merchants, the towns and villages who met to decide important affairs of state. P. 54.

<sup>35</sup> *The Boyars' Duma*. Beginning with the reign of Vladimir Monomachus, was the supreme consultative assembly of the Grand Princes and later of the Tsars. It consisted of from twenty to forty counsellors. Was abolished in the reign of Peter the Great. P. 54.

<sup>36</sup> *The Princes Shuishi*. Former appanage princes who recognized the sovereignty of Moscow. Traced their descent to Rurik. P. 59.

Rurik was a Varangian Viking. The annals compiled in the XI century date his appearance in 862 and his death in 879. According to these annals, Rurik was the founder of the dynasty which ruled the Kiev State.

<sup>37</sup> *Joasaph* (died 1555). Metropolitan of Moscow from 1539 to 1541. He was elevated by the Shuiski party and subsequently deposed by them. P. 59.

<sup>38</sup> *Macarius* (1482-1563). Metropolitan of Moscow. Regarded the autocracy as an essential bulwark of orthodoxy. In 1551 convened the Stoglavi Sobor (cf. note 10). Opened the first printing plant for printing sacred books. He, too, made the first attempts to write the history of Russia. P. 59.

<sup>39</sup> *Sylvester* (died about 1566). Dean of the Blagoveschensk Cathedral. At the end of the forties and beginning of the fifties of the XVI century, exercised considerable influence on Ivan IV. His political career was cut short owing to his opposition to the Livonian War undertaken by the Tsar. P. 59.

<sup>40</sup> *Stoglavi Sobor*. The assembly at which a number of reforms were adopted to introduce uniformity in church services and ritual. The decisions of the Council were divided up into a Hundred Chapters, hence its name. P. 59.

<sup>41</sup> *The Battle of Orsha*. The battle between the Russians and Lithuanians near Orsha, on the Dnieper, which ended in the defeat of the Russians. P. 64.

<sup>42</sup> *Synodic*. The book in which were entered the names of the dead for whom prayers were to be offered. P. 64.

<sup>43</sup> *Samogitia, or Zhmud*. The northern part of Lithuania. P. 83.

<sup>44</sup> *The Yaroslavskys, etc.* Princes of the House of Rurik. P. 98.

<sup>45</sup> *Court Boyars*. Boyars attached to the Court, i.e., under the direct command of the sovereign. P. 103.

<sup>46</sup> *Town Boyars*, those attached to towns, mainly the suburbs, to serve as Guards. P. 103.

<sup>47</sup> *Simeon Bekbulatovich*. Khan of Kasimov, who adopted Christianity. In 1574, when misfortune pressed heavily upon Ivan Grozny, he formally abdicated and proclaimed Bekbulatovich Grand Prince of All the Russians, although actually ruling behind the scenes. Two years later he banished Bekbulatovich from Moscow and gave him the administration of Tver and Torzhok. He was recalled from banishment only when Dmitri the Pretender ascended the throne. P. 104.

<sup>48</sup> *Vladimir Staritsky* (1534-1569). Appanage Prince of Staritsa and Vereya. Cousin of Ivan IV. A participant in the plot of 1567. P. 126.

<sup>49</sup> *The Metropolitan Philip*—Fedor Kolychev, Metropolitan of Moscow (1507-1569). A boyar. An avowed opponent of Ivan Grozny's home policy. Was imprisoned in the Tver Monastery, where he was strangled to death by Maluta Skuratov (cf. note 58). P. 126.

<sup>50</sup> *Devlet-Ghirai I* (died 1577). One of the most outstanding Crimean Khans. In 1571 set fire to Moscow. Extorted from the Kingdom of Muscovy an annual tribute of money and furs. P. 127.

<sup>51</sup> *Vasili Gijaznov*. An Oprichnik. Ivan Grozny's favourite. In 1572 was taken prisoner by the Crimeans. Was ransomed by the Tsar in 1577. His correspondence with the Tsar has been preserved. P. 130.

<sup>52</sup> *Divai-Müza*. Evidently the same as Daniel Müza. One of Devlet-Ghiraï's biggest generals. P. 131.

<sup>53</sup> *Kudeyar*. A Russian general under Ivan IV. Was taken prisoner by the Crimeans simultaneously with Gijaznov. (Cf. note 51.) P. 133.

<sup>54</sup> *St. George's Day*. November 26 (Old Style). The day on which peasant serfs could change their masters. P. 142.

<sup>55</sup> *Prince Ivan Belski* (died 1571). In 1565 Ivan Grozny appointed him first boyar in the Zemshchina. P. 147.

<sup>56</sup> *Mikuta Romanovich* (died 1585). In 1563 was elevated to count and boyar. From 1550-1570 was a voyevoda. His sister Anastasia was Ivan Grozny's first wife. His grandson Mikhail ascended the throne in 1613 and laid the foundation of the Romanov Dynasty. P. 147.

<sup>57</sup> *Prince Afanasi Vjazemsky*. After the fall of Adashev and Sylvester (cf. note 39), enjoyed the Tsar's unlimited confidence. Was one of the Tsar's chief advisers in the organization of the Oprichnina. P. 147.

<sup>58</sup> *Maluta Skuratov* (died 1572). A Dniep noble. Ivan Grozny's favourite Oprichnik. P. 147.

<sup>59</sup> *Alexei Basmanov*. A gifted military commander. Took part in the organization of the Oprichnina. P. 147.

<sup>60</sup> *The Princes Mstislavskys*, etc. Princes of the House of Rurik. P. 158.

<sup>61</sup> *The Princes Odolovskys*, etc. Princes of the House of Rurik, a branch line of the Princes of Chernigov. P. 164.

<sup>62</sup> *The Princes Vorotynskys*, etc. Princes of the House of Rurik. In the XVI century the Vorotynskys were in the front rank of the Moscow boyars. P. 164.

<sup>63</sup> *Troitsa*. The Troitsa-Sergeyev Monastery. A famous Russian monastery founded in 1336-1341 and greatly revered. At the present time known as the Zagorsk Monastery. P. 165.

<sup>64</sup> *The Vasa Dynasty*. The dynasty that reigned in Sweden in 1523-1654, and in Poland in 1597-1672. P. 168.

<sup>65</sup> *Baber* (Zegh-Eddin-Muhammad) (1483-1530). Great grandson of Tamerlane and founder of the dynasty of the Grand Mogul in India. P. 168.

<sup>66</sup> *Rogvolodoviches*. Princes of Polotsk, from whom, Ivan IV asserted, the Lithuanian Princes Gediminoviches descended. By this assertion Ivan Grozny tried to establish his claim to Lithuania. P. 170.

<sup>67</sup> *Jagiello* (died 1434) and *Witout* (1350-1430). Grand Princes of Lithuania. Jagiello was also King of Poland. The two were cousins who contended against each other for power in Lithuania. P. 170.

<sup>68</sup> *Selim II* (1524-1574). The Sultan of Turkey from 1566. Under his reign Turkey waged successful wars against Persia, Hungary and Venice. P. 171.



<sup>69</sup> *Prince Magnus* (1510-1583). In 1570 became King of Livonia and Ivan Grozny's vassal. Was married to Maria, daughter of Prince Vladimir Sturitsky. P. 176.

<sup>70</sup> *Mikhail Vorotynsky*. Prince. In 1572 defeated the Tatar troops under the command of Devlet-Ghirai in a battle fought fifty kilometres from Moscow. P. 178.

<sup>71</sup> *The Gediminoviches*. Lithmanian Princes who traced their descent from the Grand Prince Gedimin (died about 1340). This dynasty came to an end with the death of Sigismund II in 1572. P. 207.

<sup>72</sup> *Tsaritsa Anastasia*. Ivan IV's first wife, a descendent of Romanov-Zakharyin-Yuriev (died 1560). P. 220.

<sup>73</sup> *Boris Godunov* (1551-1605). Became Tsar of Russia in 1598. P. 228.

<sup>74</sup> *Vasili Shuiski* (1547-1612). A Prince of the House of Ruric. Ascended the throne in 1606 and deposed in 1610. P. 228.

<sup>75</sup> *Paul Oederborn* (died 1604). Historian and theologian. Born in Pomerania, was a parson in Riga. Wrote a number of books on the Kingdom of Muscovy. P. 233.

<sup>76</sup> *Beisen*. The nickname of the Boyar Ivan Beklemishev. An outstanding diplomat and statesman in the reigns of Ivan III and Vasili III. P. 236.

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